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The Essence of Yoga

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May her blessings

With regards, prem & om

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# ESSENCE OF YOGA

( Fourth Edition—Revised and Enlarged )

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BY

SWAMI SIVANANDA

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THE YOGA VEDANTA FOREST UNIVERSITY
DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY
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# PUBLISHERS' NOTE

The value of this invaluable book will be at once apparent when it is realised that Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj wrote these in response to a suggestion by a devotee that the cream of his instructions on all branches of Yoga Sadhana should be recorded in Gramophone records.

And, when the Divine Life Society thought of providing its new Members with a Sadhana set comprising of the essential accessories to Sadhana, and desired to include in it a small book which would at the same time give the essence of Yoga Sadhana, the choice fell on "Essence of Yoga" !

The choice of bringing out the first edition, with equal appropriateness, fell on the pious Sri R. Ramakrishna (now of the Delhi Secretariat) who was then in Karachi. Every inch a diligent Sadhaka, noble, humble, unostentatious and simple, Ramakrishna Ji is deeply immersed in the love of our Siva. The Seer in Siva (Sri Swami Sivanandaji) saw in this essence-of-a-Sadhaka, the fittest person to publish the first edition of "Essence of Yoga". By God's Grace, it has continued to receive very warm reception at the hands of aspirants all over the world.

This book contains ALL about Yoga, philosophy and Sadhana. It will serve as an invaluable guide to all beginners; and it will serve as a sure and strong foundation on which to build the superstructure of detailed and advanced knowledge of Yoga. And, even when this knowledge is acquired, this little book would be invaluable as a vade mecum; and a perusal of a few pages every now and then will act as a refresher.

Ananda Kutir.
*25th June, 1950.* }

**The Publishers**

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OM

DEDICATED

to

the All-blissful

Lord Siva

and his

Bhakthas.

OM

ॐ

पतञ्जलिव्यासमुखान्गुरूरन्यांश्च भक्तितः ।
नतोऽस्मि वाङ्मनः कायैरज्ञान ध्वान्तभास्करान् ॥

---

Patanjali Vyasamukhan
Gururanyamsa bhaktitah
Natosmi vangmanah
Kayairanjnanadhvanta
bhaskaran

We offer our obeisance by word, mind and body to Patanjali, Vyasa and to all other Rishis and Yogic Masters, who are like so many Suns to remove the darkness of Ajnana.

**SWAMI SIVANANDA**

ANANDA KUTIR, RISHIKESH.
(HIMALAYAS)

ॐ 1st January 1950

Blessed aspirants,

I wish you all a bright and a happy new year.

Fight bravely in this battle of life. Arm yourself with the shield of discrimination and sword of dispassion. March forward courageously. Yield not to temptations.

Meditate on the Inner Self regularly. You will enter the illimitable domain of eternal bliss and everlasting peace. You will build up the life of calm strength, repose and peace.

May Lord bless you,

Sivananda

# THE STORY OF THE FIRST EDITION

It was in 1941. Two Provinces of India disputed over the waters of Indus. Sind, which now forms part of Pakistan, and the Punjab (that part of it which is now within our motherland) argued the case at high level. The cool heights of Simla attracted an official crowd, and this humble servant of the Lord was summoned to report the proceedings. The dispute ended .........but a conflict which grew day by day within me, never ended !

Serious questions concerning life and its problems set me in the quest for a real guide. Whom could I think of but the great Sage of Ananda Kutir ? Forthwith I repaired to him from Simla. A good rest, princely treatment and motherly affection drew me intimately to this Sage, and being moved by my plight, he presented me with a manuscript, big enough for a publication.

The series of chapters of this book were originally intended to be gramophone-recorded for wide publicity. This could not, however, materialise. It was designed by Gods that Karachi public should be acquainted with them. My good friend Dr. Tarachand Lalwani, Editor of Karachi Daily, was very much interested in Swami Sivanandaji's writings and he said that the Hindu public, especially the Amil community would like to read them. I handed over the manuscript to him ; and he published, free of cost, the entire book, chapter by chapter. These chapters appeared every week in the "Karachi Daily". During much of this time, Dr. Tarachand was inside the jail bars as a political offender, and it was due to the organising power of Dr. Tarachand's wife, that the press was kept going, and the book finally came out in an attractive form. A nominal cost of eight annas a copy was fixed as price, and Karachi presented Rs. 100 out of the sale of "Essence of Yoga".

Much could have been done following this initial success for the Divine Life Society. But the capacity of a worldling is limited. The book was my eye-opener. It marked the beginning of a new life and new vision to an individual who has ever since never ceased to admire this great Sage of Ananda Kutir, who is always fresh in his exposition of the Ancient Truths of Vedanta.

May all, in this awakened land which has just won freedom, be benefited by this Sage's presence in body and soul around us is the prayer of your humble servant.

OM TAT SAT.

*22nd June, 1950.* **R. Ramakrishna.**

## UNIVERSAL PRAYER

Thou Art, O Lord! The creator of this universe. Thou art the protector of this world. Thou art in the grass and the rose. Thou art in the sun and the stars. Salutations unto Thee! O bestower of joy and bliss!

O Sweet Lord! Let me be free from the clutches of death. Let me be able to look upon all beings with equal vision. Let me be free from impurity and sin. Give me strength to control the mind. Give me strength to serve Thee and the humanity untiringly. Make me Thy fit instrument for Thy work. Make me pure and strong.

I bow to Thee, Oh Indweller of many hearts! O Secret of secrets! Remove my weakness, defects and evil thoughts. Make me pure so that I may be able to receive Thy grace and blessings. O Lord! Thou art the thread-soul that connects all beings. Thou pervadest all, permeates and interpenetrates all things of this universe.

Thou art light divine. Thou art the dispeller of ignorance. Thou art All-Merciful Lord. Give me a life without disease. Let me remember Thee always. Let me develop all sublime virtues.

Thou art self-luminous. Thou art my father, mother, brother, friend, relative and guide. Let me realise the Truth. Let me be free from greed, lust, egoism, jealousy and hatred. Prepare me as Thy sweet messenger on this earth so that I may radiate joy, peace and bliss to the whole world. Let me utilise this body, mind and senses in Thy service and the service of Thy creatures. Breathe into me Thy breath of Immortality. Let me recognise the universal brotherhood of man. Let me love all as my own self! Salutations unto Thee. O Lord of Compassion.

## PRAYER TO MOTHER

Salutations to the Divine Mother who exists in all beings in the form of intelligence, mercy and beauty. Salutations, O Sweet Mother—the consort of Lord Siva. O Mother Parvathy! Thou art Lakshmi. Thou art Saraswati. Thou art Kali, Durga and Kundalini. Thou art the embodiment of all power. Thou art Para Shakti. Thou art in the form of all objects. Thou art the sole refuge for all. Thou hast enchanted the whole world. The whole universe is the play of Thy three Gunas. How can I praise Thee? Thy glory is indescribable. Thy splendour is ineffable. Protect me, Guide me, O Loving Mother!

O Adorable Mother! Thou hast generated this great illusion by which all people walk deluded in this world. All sciences have come from Thee. Without Thy grace no one can get success in spiritual Sadhana and salvation in the end. Thou art the seed for this world. Thou hast two aspects, *viz.*, the unmanifested aspect or Avyaktam and the manifested aspect or the gross universe. The whole world gets dissolved in Avyaktam during Pralaya. Give me the divine eye. Let me behold Thy real majestic form. Help me to cross over this illusion, O Kind Mother!

O Compassionate Mother! I bow to Thee. Thou art my saviour. Thou art my goal. Thou art my sole support. Thou art my guide and the remover of all afflictions, troubles and miseries. Thou art the embodiment of auspiciousness. Thou pervadest the whole universe. The whole universe is filled with Thee. Thou art the store-house of all qualities. Do Thou protect me. I again and again salute Thee ! O glorious Mother! Salutations to Thee. All women are Thy parts. Mind, egoism, intellect, body, Prana and senses are Thy forms. Thou art Para-Prakriti and Apara-Prakriti. Thou art electricity, magnetism, force, energy, power and will. All forms are Thy forms only. Reveal to me the mystery of creation. Bestow on me the divine knowledge.

O Loving Mother! Thou art the primal energy. Thou hast two aspects, *viz.*, the terrible and the peaceful. Thou art modesty, gentleness, shyness, generosity, courage, forbearance and patience. Thou art faith in the heart of devotees and nobility in noble people, chivalry in warriors and ferocity in tigers. Give me strength to control the mind and the Indriyas. Make me worthy to dwell in Thee! Salutations unto Thee!

O Mother Supreme! When shall I have equal vision and a placid state of mind ? When shall I be established in Ahimsa, Satyam and Brahmacharya ? When shall I get deep abiding peace and perennial joy ? When shall I enter in deep meditation and Samadhi ?

O Radiant Mother! I have not done any spiritual Sadhana or service of teachers. I have not practised any Vrata, pilgrimage, charity, Japa and meditation or worship, I have not studied religious scriptures. I have neither purity nor burning yearning for liberation. Thou art my only refuge. Thou art my only support. My silent adoration unto Thee! I am Thy meek supplicant. Remove the veil of ignorance.

O Gracious Mother! Prostrations unto Thee. Where art Thou? Do not forsake me. I am Thy child. Take me to the other shore of fearlessness and joy. When shall I behold Thy lotus feet with my own eyes? Thou art boundless ocean of mercy. When the philosopher's stone turns iron into gold by contact, when the Ganges turns impure water into pure water, can'st Thou not turn me, O Mother Divine, into a pure Soul? May my tongue repeat Thy Name always!

## CHAPTER I

# YOGA

# Chapter 1—YOGA

## Yoga

Yoga is a perfect practical system of self-culture. Yoga is an exact science. It aims at the harmonious development of the body, the mind and the soul. Yoga is the turning away of the senses from the objective universe and the concentration of the mind within. Yoga is eternal life in the soul or spirit. Yoga aims at controlling the mind and its modifications. The path of Yoga is an inner path whose gateway is your heart.

Yoga is the discipline of the mind, senses and physical body. Yoga helps in the co-ordination and control of the subtle forces within the body. Yoga brings in perfection, peace and everlasting happiness. Yoga can help you in your business and in your daily life. You can have calmness of mind at all times by the practice of Yoga. You can have restful sleep. You can have increased energy, vigour, vitality, longevity and a high standard of health. Yoga transmutes animal nature into divine nature and raises you to the pinnacle of divine glory and splendour.

The practice of Yoga will help you to control the emotions and passions and will give you power to resist temptations and to remove the disturbing elements from the mind. It will enable you to keep a balanced mind always and remove fatigue. It will confer on you serenity, calmness and wonderful concentration. It will enable you to hold communion with the Lord and thus attain the *summum bonum* of existence.

If you want to attain success in Yoga, you will have to abandon all worldly enjoyments and practise Tapas and Brahmacharya. You will have to control the mind skilfully and tactfully. You will have to use judicious and intelligent methods to curb it. If you use force, it will become more turbulent and mischievous. It cannot be controlled by force. It will jump and drift away more and more. Those who attempt to control the mind by force are like those who endeavour to bind a furious elephant with a thin silken thread.

A Guru or preceptor is indispensable for the practice of Yoga. The aspirant in the path of Yoga should be humble, simple, gentle, refined, tolerant, merciful and kind. If you have a curiosity to get psychic powers, you cannot have success in Yoga. Yoga does not consist in sitting cross-legged for six hours or stopping the pulse or beatings of the heart or getting oneself buried underneath the ground for a week or a month.

Self-sufficiency, impertinence, pride, luxury, name, fame, self-assertive nature, obstinacy, idea of superiority, sensual desires, evil company, laziness, over-eating, over-work, too much mixing and too much talking are some of the obetacles in the path of Yoga. Admit your faults freely. When you are free from all these evil traits, Samadhi or union will come by itself.

Practise Yama and Niyama. Sit comfortably in Padma or Siddhasana. Restrain the breath. Withdraw the senses. Control the thoughts. Concentrate. Meditate and attain Asamprajnata or Nirvikalpa Samadhi (union with the Supreme Self).

May you shine as a brilliant Yogi by the practice of Yoga! May you enjoy the bliss of the eternal!

## Essence of Karma Yoga

Karma Yoga is selfless service unto humanity. "Your duty is to work incessantly but not to expect the fruits thereof." This is the central teaching of Gita.

Repeat your Ishtamantra mentally even when you work in office. God is the Inner Ruler. He directs the body, mind and senses to work. Become an instrument in the hands of the Lord. Do not expect thanks or appreciation for your work. Do actions as your duty and offer them and their fruits to the Lord. You will be freed from the bonds of Karma. It is not the Karma but the selfish motive that binds the man.

Never, never say, "I have helped that man." Feel and think, "That man gave me an opportunity to serve. This piece of service has helped me to purify my mind. I am extremely grateful to him." If you see a poor man clad in rags standing in front of your door, feel that the Lord is before you in the form of a poor man. Serve him with Narayana Bhav.

Never grumble when you do service to others. Take delight in service. Watch for opportunities to serve. Never miss even a single opportunity. Work is worship of the Lord.

A Karma Yogi should have an amiable, loving, social nature. He should have sympathy, adaptability, self-restraint, tolerance, love and mercy. He should adjust himself to the ways and habits of others. He should be able to bear insult, harsh words, criticisms, pleasure and pain, heat and cold.

You can do selfless service according to your ability and station in life. An advocate can plead for poor people without accepting fees. A doctor can treat the poor free of charge. A teacher or professor can give free tuition for poor boys. He can supply them books for study.

Have a medicine chest of 12 tissue remedies or some allopathic medicines or hom eopathic medicines. Serve the poor and sick with Atma Bhav. Give one-tenth of your income in charity. This is the highest Yoga.

Do not make any difference between menial and respectable work. If any one is suffering from acute pain in any part of the body, at once shampoo the affected part very gently. Feel that you are serving the Lord in the body of the patient. Repeat your Ishtamantra also. If you see a man or animal bleeding on the roadside, never hesitate to tear your upper cloth or shirt and use it for bandaging, in the absence of any other means of bandage. Do not bargain with the poor porters on the railway station. Be liberal and generous. Keep always some small coins in your pocket and distribute them to the poor and the decrepit.

Karma Yoga prepares the mind for the reception of light and knowledge. It expands the heart and breaks all barriers that stand in the way of oneness or unity. Karma Yoga is an effective Sadhana for Chitta Suddhi or purity of heart. Therefore, do selfless service constantly.

## Hatha Yoga

Hatha Yoga relates to the restraint of breath (Pranayama), Asanas, Bandhas and Mudras. 'He' and 'tha' mean the union of the Sun and the moon, union of Prana and Apana Vayus. 'Hatha' means any tenacious practice till the object or end is achieved. Tratak, standing on one leg (a kind of Tapas) and similar poses are all Hatha Yogic practices. Hatha Yoga is inseparable from Raja Yoga. Raja Yoga begins where Hatha Yoga ends. Raja Yoga and Hatha Yoga are interdependent. Raja Yoga and Hatha Yoga are the necessary counterparts of each other. No one can become a perfect Yogi without a knowledge and practice of both the Yogas. Hatha Yoga prepares the student to take up Raja Yoga.

A Hatha Yogi starts his Sadhana with body and Prana, a Raja Yogi starts his Sadhana with his mind ; a Gyana Yogi starts his Sadhana with Buddhi or intellect and will.

A Hatha Yogi gets Siddhis (psychic powers) by uniting Prana and Apana and by taking the united Prana Apana through the six Chakras (centres of spiritual energy) to Sahasrara at the crown of the head. A Raja Yogi gets Siddhis by Samyama, *i. e.*, combined practice of Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi at one time. A Gyana Yogi exhibits Siddhis through pure will or Sat Sankalpa. A Bhakta gets Siddhis through self-surrender and the consequent decent Kriyas, *viz.*, Neti, Dhauti, Nauli, Basti, Tratak and Kapalabhati, belong to Hatha Yoga. All need not practise these Kriyas. Those who have got much phlegm in the body should practise these Kriyas. Learn these under an expert Hatha Yogi. Hatha Yoga is not the goal. It is only a means to an end. Take to Raja Yoga after possessing good health.

Do Asana, Kumbhak, Mudra and shake the Kundalini. Then take it to Sahasrara through Chakras in the Sushumna, O children of light. Will you drink not, will you drink not, the nectar of immortality ?

Brother ! Attain good health. Without health how can you live ? Without health how can you earn ? Without health how can you get success in Yoga or any undertaking ? Possess wonderful health through the practice of Hatha Yoga. Drink the nectar in Sahasrara and live in the immortal abode of Siva.

## Yoga Asanas

Health is wealth. Health is indeed a covetable possession. Good health is a valuable asset for one and all. It can be achieved by the regular practice of Yoga Asanas.

The practice of Asanas controls the emotions, produces mental peace, distributes, Prana evenly throughout the body and different systems, helps in maintaining healthy functioning of the internal organs, gives internal massage to the various abdominal organs. Physical exercises draw the Prana (energy) out but the Asanas send the Prana in. The practice of Asanas cures many diseases and awakens Kundalini Shakti. These are the chief advantages in the Yogic system of exercises which no other systems have.

Practise a few Asanas daily at least for a period of fifteen minutes. You will possess wonderful health. Be regular in your practice. Regularity is of paramount importance. Practise Bhujang, Salab, Dhanur, Sarvang, Hala and Paschimottan Asanas. Bhujang, Salab and Dhanur will remove constipation and muscular pain of the back. Sirsh, Sarvang and Hala will help you in maintaining Brahmacharya, rendering the spine elastic and curing all diseases. Paschimottan will reduce fat in the belly and help digestion. Relax all muscles in Savasan in the end.

Asanas should be done on empty stomach in the morning or at least three hours after food.

Morning time is best for doing Asanas. Do not wear spectacles when you do Asanas. Wear a singlet if necessary and a Langotee. Be moderate in your diet. Practice of Brahmacharya is very important for success in Yoga Asanas. Start with minimum time for each Asana and then gradually increase the period. Answer the calls of nature before you start the practice. Boys and girls over ten years of age as well as women can practise Asanas.

The world needs good healthy strong boys and girls. What do we find in these days in India? India, the land of Rishis and sages, the land which produced Bhisma, Bhima, Arjuna, Drona, Aswatthama, Kripa, Parasurama and countless other chivalrous warriors, the soil which contained numberless Rajput chiefs of undaunted courage and matchless strength, now abounds in weak and timid persons. Children beget children. The laws of health are ignored and neglected. The nation is suffering and dying. The world requires numberless brave, moral, Adhyatmic soldiers who are equipped with the five virtues, *viz.*, Ahimsa, Satyam, Asteya, Brahmacharya and Aparigraha.

## Pranayama

Pranayama is an exact science. It is the fourth Anga or limb of Ashtanga Yoga. It is the regulation of breath or control of Prana.

Pranayama steadies the mind, augments the gastric fire, energises digestion, invigorates the nerves destroys Rajas, destroys all diseases, removes all laziness, makes the body light and healthy and awakens Kundalini.

Pranayama should be practised when the stomach is empty. Be regular in your practice. Do not take bath immediately after the practice. Do not practise Kumbhak or retention of breath in the beginning. Have only slow and mild Purak (inhalation) and Rechak (exhalation) Do not strain the breath beyond your capacity. Keep the ratio for Purak, Kumbhak and Rechak as 1:4:2. Exhale very very slowly.

Sit on Padma, Siddha or Sukha Asana. Keep the head, neck and trunk in a straight line. Inhale slowly through the left nostril and retain the breath according to the ratio, then exhale slowly through the right nostril. This is half process of Pranayama. Then inhale through the right nostril, retain and exhale through the left nostril. Do not retain the breath for more than one or two minutes.

Do ten or twenty Pranayams according to your capacity. Do not fatigue yourself. Increase the number gradually. You can go up to 16:64:32. This is Sukh Purvak or easy comfortable Pranayama.

Practise Sitali in summer. This will purify your blood and cool the system too. Practise Bhastrika in winter. This will cure Asthma and consumption. Repeat 'OM' or 'Ram' mentally during the practice. Observe Brahmacharya and diet control. You will derive maximum benefits and will quickly purify the Nadis or nerves.

Prana and mind are intimately related to each other. If you control Prana, the mind will also be controlled. If you control the mind, Prana will be automatically controlled. Prana is related to mind, and through it to will; and through will to the individual soul and through individual soul to the Supreme Soul.

Start the practice this very second in right earnest. Control the breath and calm the mind. Steady the breath and enter Samadhi. Restrain the breath and lengthen the life. Subdue the breath and become a Yogi, a dynamo of power, peace, bliss and happiness.

## Kundalini Yoga

Kundalini Shakti is the coiled up, dormant, cosmic power that underlies all organic as well as inorganic matter. It is the primordial energy that lies at the basal Muladhara Chakra in a dormant, potential state. Kundalini Yoga is that Yoga which treats of Kundalini Shakti, the seven Chakras or centres of spiritual energy, the arousing of the sleeping Kundalini Shakti and its union with Lord Siva in Sahasrara Chakra at the crown of the head. The seven Chakras are pierced by the passing of Kundalini Shakti to the top of the head.

The seven Chakras are: Muladhara (at the anus), Swadhistana (at the root of the organ), Manipura (at the navel), Anahata (in the heart), Vishuddha (in the neck), Ajna (in the space between the two eye-brows) and Sahasrara at the crown of the head.

Nadis are the astral tubes that carry Pranic currents. They cannot be seen by naked eyes. They are not the ordinary nerves, arteries and veins. There are 72000 Nadis. Among them three are important. They are Ida, Pingala and Sushumna. Sushumna is the most important one, because Kundalini passes through this Nadi only. The first step in Kundalini Yoga is the purification of Nadis. When Sushumna is pure then only Kundalini will pass through it. Purification of Nadis is done by the practice of Pranayama.

The Yogi opens the mouth of Sushumna Nadi through Pranayama, Bandha and Mudras, awakens the sleeping Kundalini and takes her to Sahasrara at the crown of the head through the lower six Chakras. Kundalini sleeps in the Muladhara Chakra in 3½ coils. The three coils represent the three Gunas and half coil represents the Vikritis.

Kundalini is awakened through Pranayama : Asanas and Mudras by Hatha Yogins, through concentration by Raja Yogins, through devotion and perfect self-surrender by Bhaktas or devotes : through analytical will, by the Gyanis ; by Japa of Mantra and by the grace of the Guru.

If you are pure and free from all desires, Kundalini will awaken by itself and you will be benefited. If you awaken Kundalini by violent methods, forcibly, when your heart is impure, when desires lurk in your mind, you will come across temptations of various sorts, when you move from plane to plane, you will have a downfall. You will have no strength of will to resist these temptations.

That aspirant who has firm faith in Yogic Shastras, who is courageous, devotional, humble, generous, merciful, pure and dispassionate, can easily awaken Kundalini and attain success in Samadhi. He should also be equipped with right conduct and self-restraint (Yoga); he should constantly engage himself in the service of his Guru and be free from lust, anger, Moha, greed and vanity.

When Kundalini is taken to the Sahasrara, when she is united with Lord Siva, perfect Samadhi (superconscious blissful state) ensues. The Yogi drinks the nectar of immortality.

May Mother Kundalini guide you all in your Yogic practices! May Her blessings be upon you all!

## Raja Yoga

Raja Yoga is an exact science. It aims in controlling all thought waves or mental modifications. It concerns with the mind, its purification and control. Hence it is called Raja Yoga, *i.e.*, kind of all Yogas. It is otherwise known as Ashtanga Yoga *i.e.*, Yoga with eight limbs

The eight limbs of Ashtanga Yoga are: Yama (self restraint), Niyama (religious observances). Asana (posture). Pranayama (restraint of breath). Pratyahara (abstraction of senses), Dharana (concentration), Dhyana (meditation) and Samadhi (super-conscious state). Yama is practice of Ahimsa (non-injury), Satyam (truthfulness), Astheya (non-stealing), Brahmacharya (celibacy) and Aparigraha (non-covetousness) in thought, word and deed. This is the foundation of Yoga. Niyama is observance of the five canons, *viz.*, Saucha (internal and external purity), Santosh (contentment), Tapas (austerity); Swadhyaya (study of religious books and repetition of Mantras) and Ishwara Pranidhana (worship of God and self-surrender). Cultivate Maitri (friendship with equals), Karuna (mercy towards inferiors), Mudita (complacency towards superiors), Upeksha (indifference towards wicked people). You can eradicate jealousy, hatred and attain peace of mind. Ascend the ladder of Yoga patiently through its different rungs and attain the highest summit of the ladder, *i.e.*, Asamprajnata Samadhi, wherein all Samskaras (impression) which bring about successive births are absolutely fried up.

If you really aspire to unfold the lurking divinity within, if you really want to get rid of the meshes of this Samsara, you must know the technique of thought-control which is embodied in the system of Raja Yoga. You must know the ways of right living, right thinking, right speaking and right acting. You must practise the five rules of Yama or right conduct or Sadachara. You must know how to withdraw the mind from external objects and fix it on one point. You must know the right method of concentration and meditation. Then alone you can be really happy. Then and then alone, you will have power independence and suzerainty. Then and then alone, you will attain immortality, freedom and perfection. A knowledge of the ways and habits of the mine and its operations, the laws of the mind and the methods of mental control and mental discipline is very necessary if you want to enjoy real happiness and peace of an unruffled and abiding nature.

Practise Raja Yoga, control the thoughts, discipline the mind, meditate regularly and attain independence, immortality, freedom and perfection.

## Control of Mind

Mind is Atma Shakti. It is through mind only that Brahman or the Supreme Self manifests as the differentiated universe with heterogeneous objects.

Mind is nothing but a collection of Samskaras or impressions. It is nothing but a bundle of habits. The true nature of the mind consists in the Vasanas or subtle desires. The idea of 'I' or egoism is the seed of the tree of mind. The sprout which spring up from this seed egoism is Buddhi or intellect. From this sprout the ramifying branches called Sankalpas take their origin.

Mind is made up of subtle Sattvic matter. According to Chandogya Upanishad, mind is formed out of the subtlest portion of food.

Mind is of two kinds, *viz.*, the Asuddha or impure mind and the Suddha or the pure mind. The former leads to bondage while the latter helps the aspirant to attain liberation.

Manolaya or temporary absorption of the mind in the object of meditation will not help you to attain liberation. Manonasa or annihilation of the mind only will enable you to achieve the final emancipation or Moksha.

Have no longing for objects. Reduce your wants. Cultivate Vairagya or dispassion. Vairagya thins out the mind.

Do not mix much. Do not talk much. Do not walk much. Do not eat much. Do not sleep much.

Control your emotion · Abandon desires and Vasanas. Control irritability and lust. Slay the impure mind through the pure mind and transcend the pure mind through meditation. Practise perfect Brahmacharya. There is no half measure in the spiritual path.

Never wrestle with the mind. Do not use any violent efforts in concentration. When the mind is jumping and wandering much, make no violent effort to control the mind but rather allow it to run along for a while and exhaust its efforts. It will take advantage of the opportunity and will jump around like an unchained monkey at first. Then it will gradually become quiet and look to you for orders.

If evil thoughts enter your mind, do not use your will force in driving them. You will lose energy. You will tax your will. You will fatigue yourself. The greater the efforts you make, the more the evil thoughts will return with redoubled force. They will return more quickly also. The thoughts will become more powerful. Be indifferent. Keep quiet. Become a silent witness of those thoughts. Do not identify yourself with them. They will vanish soon. Substitute good thoughts. Pray and sing the Lord's name.

Never miss for a day your meditation. Regularity is of paramount importance. When the mind is tired do not concentrate. Give a little rest. Do not take heavy food at night. This will interfere with your morning meditation.

Japa, Kirtan, Pranayama, Satsang (association with the sages), practice of Sama (serenity), Dama self-restraint), Yama (right conduct), Sattvic or pure food, study of Scriptures, meditation, Vichara or Atmic enquiry—all these will help you to control the mind and attain eternal bliss and immortality.

## Nada Yoga

Sit in Padmasan or Siddhasan or Sukhasan. Close the ears with the thumbs. This is Shunmukhi Mudra or Vaishnavi Mudra. Hear the music of Anahat sounds. You will have wonderful concentration.

Do Japa (Ajapa Japa) of Soham with breath or Japa of any Mantra. Practise Pranayama for cne or two months. You will hear the ten sounds clearly and enjoy the music of the soul. The sound that you hear will make you deaf to all external sounds.

Abandon all worldly thoughts. Control your passion. Become indifferent to all objects. Practise Yama (self-restraint), or Sadachara (right conduct). Concentrate your attention on the sound which annihilates the mind.

The sound serves the purpose of a sharp goad to control the elephant-mind which roams in the pleasure garden of the sensual objects. It serves the purpose of a snare for binding the deer—Chitta. Just as the bee which drinks the honey does not care for the odour, so the mind which is absorbed in sound, does not long for sensual objects.

The first sound is chini, the second is chinichini. The third is the sound of a bell. The fourth is like that of a conch. The fifth is like that of a lute. The sixth is like that of a cymbal. The seventh is like that of a flute. The eighth is like that of a drum. The ninth is like that of a Mridanga. The tenth is like that of thunder. Hear the internal sound through the right ear. Change your concentration from the gross sound to the subtle. The mind will soon be absorbed in the sound.

You will get knowledge of hidden things in the seventh. In the eighth stage you will hear Paravak. In the ninth you will develop divine eye. In the tenth you will attain Para Brahman.

The sound entraps the mind. The mind becomes one with the sound as milk with water. It becomes absorbed in Brahman or the Absolute. You will then attain the seat of Eternal Bliss.

## CHAPTER II

# BHAKTI YOGA

# Chapter II—BHAKTI YOGA

## Brahman or God Exists

Para Brahma cannot be demonstrated. But it is possible to infer the existence from certain empirical facts. The existence of Brahman is known from the fact of its being the SELF of every one. For everyone is conscious of the existence of his self and never thinks "I am not." If the existence of his self were not known, everyone would think: "I am not. This self, of whose existence all are conscious, is Brahman. There is an inherent feeling in everybody: "I exist—Aham Asmi."

Your dream sometimes that you are dead and that your relatives are weeping. Even in that supposed death state, you see and hear them weeping. This clearly indicates that, even after the apparent death, life really persists You exist even after the physical sheath is thrown out. That existence is Atman or Brahman or the Supreme Self.

Close your eyes and imagine for a moment that you are dead. You can never do so. You can never think that you will not exist after death. You will imagine that your dead body is lying flat and that you are witnessing the dead body. This definitely proves that you are always the witnessing subject or Sakshi.

When you are in the dark, when you are behind a veil, if anybody enquires : 'Who is there ?' you will unhesitatingly answer : 'It is I.' If he again asks you : 'Who is there ?' you will say : 'I am Mr. So and So.' This 'I am Mr. So and So' is a mental Kalpana or false super-imposition on account of ignorance. At first you have expressed spontaneously your inherent feeling of existence, the big infinite 'I'. Nothing can resist this innate feeling of 'Aham Asmi.'

By whose command are the earth and the sky, the Sun and the moon, uphold in their places ? By whose command do the seas not overstep their limits ? By whose command does the Sun rise punctually in the morning and set in the evening ? By whose command do the seasons, solstices and the years not transgress ? By whose command do Karmas and their performers and their fruits not likewise go beyond their appointed time ? It is by the command of Brahman—the Inner Ruler, Controller and Governor.

What is common in trees, ants, birds, stones and man ? Existence. A tree exists. A bird exists. A stone exists. A man exists. Existence is Brahman.

Some are rich, some are poor. Some are healthy, some are born blind. Some die at eighty, some die at ten. What is the cause for this variation ? This clearly proves the theory of Karma, that there is one Omniscient Lord, who is the dispenser of fruits of actions of human beings, who fixes the span of life in accordance with the nature of their actions, who knows the exact relation between Karmas and their fruits.

Karma is Jada or insentient. It certainly cannot dispense the fruits of the actions.

In sleep there are no senses, no objects, no mind and yet you experience the highest bliss. Wherefrom have you derived the bliss? The mind rests in Brahman during sleep and it is from Brahman this bliss is derived.

*Cogito ergo sum*—I think, therefore, I exist. This is Descarte's fundamental basis of philosophy. Sri Sankara says: "This Atman cannot be illusive, for, he who whould deny it, witnesses its reality even in denying it."

## Power of Prayer

Prayer elevates the mind. It fills the mind with purity. It is associated with praise of God. It keeps the mind in tune with God. Prayer can reach a realm where reason dare not enter. Prayer can move mountains. It can work miracles. It frees the devotee from the fear of death, brings him nearer to God and makes him feel the divine presence everywhere. It awakens in him the divine consciousness and makes him feel his essential, immortal and blissful nature.

It was the prayer of Prahlad that rendered cool the burning oil when it was poured on his head. It was the prayer of Mira that converted the bed of nails into a bed of roses and the cobra into a flower-garland.

Prayer has tremendous influence. Mahatma Gandhi is a great votary of prayer. If the prayer is sincere and if it proceeds from the bottom of your heart (Antarika), it will at once melt the heart of the Lord. Sri Krishna had to run bare-footed from Dwarka on hearing the heart-felt prayer of Draupadi. You all know this. Lord Hari, the mighty ruler of this universe, apologised before Prahlad for coming a little late when the latter prayed. How merciful and loving is the Lord!

Say even once from the bottom of your heart: "O Lord, I am thine. Thy will be done. Have mercy on me. I am Thy servant and devotee Forgive. Guide. Protect. Enlighten. Trahe. Prachodayat." Have a meek, receptive attitude of mind. Have Bhav in your heart. The prayer is at once heard and responded to. Do this in the daily battle of life and realise yourself the high efficacy of prayer. You must have strong Astikya Buddhi (strong conviction in the existence of God).

Christians have different prayers for getting various gifts and bounties from God. Mohammedans and all religionists have daily prayers at sunrise, noon, sunset, just before retiring to bed, just before taking food. Prayer is the beginning of Yoga. Prayer is the first important Anga (limb) of Yoga. Preliminary spiritual Sadhana or practice is prayer.

God helps even a dacoit when he prays. Pray to God for purity, devotion, light and knowledge. You will get these things. Get up early in the morning and repeat some prayers for getting mental and physical Brahmacharya. Pray in any manner you like. Become as simple as a child. Open freely the chambers of of your heart. Sincere Bhaktas know pretty well about the high efficacy of prayers. Narada Muni is still praying. Nama Deva prayed and Vittal came out of the image to eat his food. Ekanath prayed ; Lord Hari showed his Chaturbhuj form. Sri Krishna served Damaji as a servant when he prayed ; He played the part of a menial in paying his dues to the Badshah. What more do you want ? Pray fervently right now from this very second. Do not delay, friend. That 'to-morrow' will never come.

The power of prayer is indescribable. Its glory is ineffable. Only sincere devotees realise its usefulness and splendour. It should be done with reverence, faith and Nishkamya Bhav (without expectation of fruits), and with a heart wet with devotion. O ignorant man ! Do not argue about the efficacy of prayer. You will be deluded. There is no arguing in spiritual matters. Intellect is a finite and a frail instrument. Do not trust this. Remove now the darkness of your ignorance through the light of prayer.

## Bhakti Yoga

The term 'Bhakti' comes from the root 'Bhaj' which means 'to be attached to god.' Bhakti is of the form of supreme love towards God. It is love for love's sake. The devotee wants God and God alone. There is no selfish expectation here. Bhakti is of the nature of nectar. It is the spontaneous outpouring of love towards God. It is pure unselfish love or Suddha Prem. It is the sacred higher emotion with sublime sentiments that unites the devotee with the Lord. It has to be experienced by the devotees.

Bhakti is the basis of all religious life. Bhakti destroys Vasanas and egoism. Bhakti elevates the mind to magnanimous heights. Bhakti is the master-key to open the chambers of wisdom. Bhakti culminates in Gyana. Bhakti begins in two and ends in one. Para Bhakti and Gyana are one.

There is no virtue higher than love ; there is no treasure higher than love ; there is no Dharma higher than love ; there is no religion higher than love ; because, love is Truth and love is God. Love, Prem and Bhakti are synonymous terms. This world has come out of love. This world exists in love and this world ultimately dissolves in love. God is an embodiment of love. In every inch of His creation, you can verily understand His love.

A life without love, faith and devotion is a dreary waste. It is a real death. Love is divine. Love is the greatest power on earth. It is irresistible. It is love alone that can really conquer the heart of a man. Love subdues an enemy. Love can tame wild ferocious animals. Its power is infinite. Its depth is unfathomable. Its nature is ineffable. Its glory is indescribable. The essence of religion is love. Therefore, develop pure love.

Do you really want God ? Do you really thirst for His Darshan ? Have you got real spiritual hunger ? Only he, who thirsts for the Darshan of God, will develop love. Unto him alone, He will reveal Himself. God is a question of supply and demand. If there is a sincere demand for God, the supply will come at once.

Develop the nine modes of Bhakti gradually. Hear the Lilas of the Lord: this is Sravana. Sing his praise: this is Kirtana. Remember His names: this is Smarana. Worship His lotus feet: this is Padasevana. Offer flowers: this is Archana. Prostrate before Him: this is Vandan. Do service unto Him: this is Dasya Bhav. Make friendship with Him: this is Sakhya Bhava. Do total unreserved self-surrender unto Him: this is Atma Nivedana.

Sit not idly praying to God to help thee, but be up and doing as God helps only those who help themselves. Do the best you can and leave the rest to God. Serve the devotees. Remain in their company. Do Japa and Kirtan. Study Ramayana and Bhagavatam. Live in Brindaban or Ayodhya for some time. You will soon develop devotion.

Pray fervently like Prahlad. Sing like Radha. Repeat His names like Valmiki, Tukaram and Tulsidas. Do Kirtan like Gouranga. Weep in solitude like Mira for the separation from the Lord. You will have Darshan of the Lord this very second.

Kindle the light of love in your heart. Love all. Include all creatures in the warm embrace of your love. Cultivate Viswa Prem or all-embracing, all-inclusive cosmic love. Love is a mysterious divine glue that unites the hearts of all. It is a divine magical healing balm of very high potency. Charge every action with pure love. Kill cunningness, greed, crookedness and selfishness. Immortality can be attained only by performing acts of kindness continuously. Hatred, anger and jealousy are removed by continuous service with loving heart. You will get more strength, more joy, more satisfaction by doing kind acts. Practice of compassion, charitable acts, kind services, purify and soften the heart, turn the heart-lotus upwards and prepare the aspirant for the reception of divine light.

The Shastras are endless. There is much to be known. Time is short. Obstacles are many. That which is essence should be grasped, just as the swan takes the essence of milk alone from a mixture of water and milk. That essence is love or Bhakti. Drink this essence and attain the everlasting abode of Peace and Immortality.

Live in love. Breathe in love. Sing in love. Eat love. Drink love. Walk in love Talk in love. Pray in love. Meditate in love. Think in love. Move in love. Write in love. Die in love. Taste the honey of divine love and become an embodiment of love (Prem Vigraha or Prem Murthy).

May the fire of devotion grow brighter in you all! May your heart be filled with devotion! May you all live drowned in the ocean of love in an illumined state! May the blessings of Bhagavatas be upon you all. Peace be with you all!

## Japa Yoga

Japa is the repetition of any Mantra or name of the Lord. In this Iron Age, Japa is an easy way for God-realisation. Tukaram, Prahlad, Valmiki Dhruva and several others attained salvation by Japa alone. Sri Krishna says in the Gita. "*Yagnanam Japa Yagnasmi*"—"Among Yagnas, I am Japa Yagna (Yoga)".

There are three kinds of Japa, *viz.*, verbal or loud Japa (Vaikari), semi—verbal Japa (Upansu) or humming, and mental Japa (Manasic or silent repetition through mind). Mental Japa is more powerful. It gives a reward ten thousand times more than the loud Japa. When the mind wanders aimlessly take to loud Japa.

Japa must become habitual. It must be done with Sattvic or divine Bhav or feeling purity, Prem and Sraddha. There is an indescribable power of Achintya Shakti in the names of God or Mantra. Every name is filled with countless Shaktis or potencies.

Practice of Japa removes the impurities of the mind, just as soap cleanses the cloth of its impurities. Be regular in your Japa. Japa destroys the sins and brings the devotee face to face with God.

The name of God chanted correctly or incorrectly, knowingly or unknowingly, carefully or carelessly, with Bhav or without Bhav is sure to give the desired fruit. The Bhav will come by itself after some time. Get up at 4 a.m. and do the Japa for two hours. You will get the maximum benefits.

The glory of the name of God cannot be established through reasoning and intellect. It can certainly be experienced or realised only through devotion, faith and constant repetition of the Name. Have reverence and faith for the name of God. Do not argue.

Devotees of Lord Hari can repeat the Mantras 'Hari OM' or 'OM Namo Narayana.' Devotees of Sri Rama can repeat 'Sri Rama', or 'Sitaram', or 'OM Sri Ram, Jaya Ram, Jaya Jaya Ram'. Devotees of Sri Krishna can repeat 'OM Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya.' Devotees of Lord Siva can repeat 'OM Namasivaya'. Perform 200 Malas of Japa daily. Wear a Mala on your neck. Mala is a whip to goad the mind towards God.

O Man! Take refuge in the Name. Name and Nami are inseparable. In this Iron Age, Japa is the easiest, quickest, safest and surest way to reach God and attain immortality and perennial Joy. Glory to the Lord! Glory to His Name !!

## Sankirtan Yoga

Sankirtan is singing God's name with feeling (Bhav), love (Prem) and faith (Sraddha). In Sankirtan people join together and sing God's name collectively in a common place. Sankirtan is one of the nine modes of Bhakti. You can realise God through Kirtan alone. This is the easiest method for attaining God-consciousness in Kali Yuga or the Iron Age "*Kalau Kesava Kirtanat*".

When several people join together and practise Sankirtan, a huge spiritual current or Mahashakti is generated. This purifies the heart of the aspirants and elevates them to the sublime heights of divine ecstasy or Samadhi. The powerful vibrations are carried to distant places. They bring elevation of mind, solace, strength to all people and work as a harbinger of peace, harmony and concord. They annihilate hostile forces and quickly bring peace and bliss to the whole world.

Lord Hari says to Narada "*Naham Vasami Vaikunte Yoginam Hridayenacha, Mad Bhakta Yatra Gayanti Tatra Tishthami Narada*", *i e.*, "I dwell not in Vaikunta nor in the hearts of the Yogis, but I dwell where my devotees sing my name, O Narada."

Kirtan destroys sins, Vasanas and Samskaras, fills the heart with Prem and devotion and brings the devotee face to face with God.

Akhand Kirtan is very powerful. It purifies the heart. The Mahamantra : '*Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare*' or '*Om Namasivaya*' is sung continuously for 3 hours or 24 hours, three days, or a week. You will have to form batches. One will lead and others will follow. Do Akhanda Kirtan on Sundays or holidays. Do Prabhat Pheri Kirtan in the morning around the streets. Kirtan in the early morning is more effective than Kirtan at night.

At night, sit before the picture of the Lord along with your children, family members and servants. Do Kirtan for one or two hours. Be regular in the practice. You will derive immense peace and strength.

Sing the Lord's name from the bottom of your heart. Be wholly and solely devoted to Him. Delay in

God-realisation is extremely painful. Merge in Him. Live in Him. Be established in Him.

May peace and prosperity abide in you all !

*Lokasamasta Sukhino Bhavantu.*

## Kalisantharana Upanishad

At the end of Dwapara Yuga, Narada went to Brahma and said : "O Lord ! How can I cross Kali or mundane existence easily ?" Brahma replied. "Well asked. Hearken to that which all Vedas keep secret and hidden, through which one may cross the Samsara or mundane existence. He destroys the evil effects of Kali through the mere uttering of the word 'Lord Narayana,' who is the primeval Purusha !"

Narada asked Brahma : "O venerable Lord ! what is the name ? Brahma replied : "The names are :

*Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare.*
*Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna,*
*Hare Hare.*

These sixteen names destroy the evil effects of Kali or sins. There is no better means than this in all the Vedas. These sixteen names destroy the Awarana or veil of ignorance that has enveloped the Jivas or the human beings. Then just as the Sun shines fully after the clouds are dispersed, so also, Para Brahman or Supreme Self alone shines after the veil is removed."

Narada asked : "O Lord ! What are the rules to be observed when one utters these names ? Brahma replied : "O Rishi Narada ! There are no rules. Whoever repeats these names three and a half crores or 35 millions in a pure or an impure state, is freed at once from all sins. He is at once released from all bondages. He merges himself in the Lord and attains Eternal Bliss and Immortality".

The Jiva has sixteen Kalas, corresponding to which sixteen words or names are given in this Mahamantra. This is very good for repetition during Akhanda Kirtan. If you repeat this Mantra 20,000 times per day you will finish 3½ crores within 5 years. You can sing this Mantra and can do Japa also. You can write this Mantra in a note book as Likhit Japa.

The names of God, chanted in any way, correctly or incorrectly, knowingly or unknowingly, carefully or carelessly, is sure to give the desired result. The glory of the Name of God cannot be established through reasoning and intellect. It can certainly be experienced or realised through devotion, faith and constant repetition of the name only. Every name is filled with countless potencies or Shaktis. The power of name is ineffable. Its glory is indescribable. The efficiency and inherent Shakti of the name of God is unfathomable.

May you attain God consciousness by repetition of the names of God as described above !! May you have real taste for the names of the Lord !

## CHAPTER III

# SPIRITUAL SADHANA

# Chapter III—SPIRITUAL SADHANA

## Twenty Spiritual Instructions

1. Get up at 4 a.m. daily. This is Brahma Muhurta which is extremely favourable for meditation on God.

2. Asana : Sit on Padma, Siddha or Sukha Asana for Japa and meditation for half an hour, facing East or North. Increase the period gradually to three hours. Do Sirshasana and Sarvangasan for keeping up Brahmacharya and health. Take light physical exercise as walking etc., regularly. Do twenty Pranayams.

3. Japa : Repeat any Mantra as pure OM or OM Namo Narayana, OM Namasivaya. OM Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya, Om Saravanabhavaya Namah, Sita Ram, Sri Ram, Hari OM or Gayatri, according to your taste or inclination from 108 to 21,600 times daily.

4. Dietetic discipline : Take Sattvic food, Suddha Ahara. Give up chillies, tamarind, garlic, onion, sour articles, oil, mustard and asafoetida. Observe moderation in diet (Mithahara). Do not overload the stomach. Give up those things which the mind likes best for a fortnight in a year. Eat simple food. Milk and fruits help concentration. Take food as medicine, to keep life going. Eating for enjoyment is sin. Give up salt and sugar for a month. You must be able to live on rice, dhall and bread without any chutnie. Do not

ask for extra salt for dhall and sugar for tea, coffee or milk.

5. Have a separate meditation room under lock and key.

6. Do charity regularly every month or even daily according to your means or one anna per rupee.

7. Swadhyaya: Study systematically the Gita, Ramayana, Bhagavatam, Vishnu Sahasranama, Lalita Sahasranama, Aditya Hridayam, Upanishads or Yoga Vasishta, for half an hour to one hour daily and have Suddha Vichara.

8. Preserve the vital force (Veerya) very very carefully. Veerya is God in motion or manifestation, Vibhuti. Veerya is all power. Veerya is money. Veerya is the essence of life, thought and intelligence.

9. Get by heart some prayer Slokas, Stotras and repeat them as soon as you sit on the Asana before starting Japa or meditation. This will elevate the mind quickly.

10. Have Sat-Sangh. Give up bad company, smoking, meat and alcoholic liquors entirely. Do not develop any evil habits.

11. Fast on Ekadasi or live on milk and fruits only.

12. Have a Japa Mala (rosary) round your neck or in your pocket or underneath your pillow at night.

13. Observe Mouna for a couple of hours daily.

14. Speak the truth at all costs. Speak little. Speak sweet.

15. Reduce your wants. If you have four shirts, reduce the number to three or two. Lead a happy

contented life. Avoid unnecessary worry. Have plain living and high thinking.

16. Never hurt anybody. Control anger by love, Kshama (forgiveness) and Daya (compassion).

17. Do not depend upon servants. Self reliance is the highest of all virtues.

18. Think of the mistakes you have committed during the course of the day, just before retiring to bed (self-analysis). Keep daily diary and self-correction register as Benjamin Franklin did. Do not brood over the past mistakes.

19. Remember that death is awaiting you every moment. Never fail to fulfil your duties. Have pure conduct (Sadachara).

20. Think of God as soon as you wake up and just before you go to sleep. Surrender yourself completely to God (Saranagathi).

This is the essence of all spiritual Sadhanas. This will lead you to Moksha. All these Niyamas or spiritual canons must be rigidly observed. You must not give leniency to the mind.

## Resolves

The spiritual path is thorny, precipitous and rugged. Temptations will assail you. Your will, sometimes, will become weak. Sometimes, there will be downfall or a backward pull by the dark Asuric antagonistic forces. In order to strengthen your will and resist the unfavourable currents, you will have to make, again and again, fresh resolves. This will help you to ascend the ladder of Yoga, vigorously and quickly. Here are some resolves. Stick to them tenaciously. Watch the mind carefully and keep a daily spiritual record.

1. I must get up at 4 a.m., to-day for practising meditation. (I will have an alarm time-piece).

2. I will certainly observe Brahmacharya for ~~a month.~~ ever

3. I will, at any cost, speak truth to-day.

4. I will not speak harsh or vulgar words to-day.

5. I will do 21,600 (200 Malas) Japa this Sunday.

6. I will observe complete Mouna this Sunday.

7. I will live on milk and fruits this Ekadasi.

8. I will finish the study of the whole of Gita on this Sunday (Swadhyaya) and write my Ishta Mantra or Guru Mantra for 2 hours.

9. I will spend one-tenth of my income on charity this month.

10. I will take only three things to-day—dhal and bread in the noon and milk at night.

11. I will not use shoes and bed-stead to-day.

12. I will not become angry to-day.

I will give up night meals and do 10 Malas of Japa if I break any of my resolves.

When you make these resolves, stand before the Lord's picture with folded hands and pray devoutly for His grace and mercy. You will doubtless get immense strength to carry out these resolves.

Even if you fail in your attempt, do not be discouraged. Every failure is a stepping stone for success. Make a fresh resolve again with more firm and fiery determination. You are bound to succeed. Conquest over one weakness will give you additional strength and will-force to get over another weakness or defect. The baby tries to walk, gets up and falls down. Again it makes another attempt. Eventually, it walks steadily. Even so, you will have to fall down and get up, again and again, when you walk in the spiritual path. In the long run, you will steadily climb up to the summit of the hill of Yoga and reach the pinnacle of Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

May Lord give you strength of will to carry out your resolves !

## Message of Vairagya

There is not even an iota of bliss in this world. All are illusory in this universe. All wordly things are generative of pain only and fraught with all dangers. This life is ephemeral. There is nothing so baneful as this life which is perishable in its nature. What beauty is there to be enjoyed in this body which is composed of blood and flesh and which has a tendency to rot? Even the most virulent of poison is no poison but the sensual object is truly so. The former kills only one body, whereas, the latter destroys many bodies in successive births.

Fie on this uneven life which is attended with pains, sorrows, diseases and death. You cannot find one object in this universe which is sweet and beneficial for one twinkling of the eye at least. Even the greatest of persons will, in course of time, become dust—the lowest of the low. Emperors, poets, scientists, orators and intellectual giants have come and gone.

It is very difficult to get a human birth. This precious life is meant for attaining Self-realisation. Ignorant persons, like innocent children that do taste again and again sweetmeats which give sweetness for the time being, indulge themselves in illusory, transient, sensual pleasures and are caught, again and again, in the wheel of births and deaths. They are not ashamed to repeat the same sensual act. What a miserable life they lead! How pitiable is their lot.

You are elated when you get a son, when you get married, when you get some sudden fortune or increase in salary; but you feel sorry when your wife dies, when you lose your money, when you are thrown out of employment, when you suffer from some acute pain.

Now tell me, friend, what do you really find in this illusory world—happiness or pain? Have you now understood the illusory nature of this world? This world is a mere show. The mind and the senses are deceiving you at every moment. You have mistaken pain for pleasure. There is not even an iota of happiness in this universe.

Will your son, or daughter, or friend, or relative, help you when you are about to die? Have you got one sincere unselfish friend in this world? All are selfish. There is no pure love. But that Lord, your real immortal friend and father who dwells in your heart, will never forsake you though you may forget Him. Adore Him in silence, that God of gods, that

Divinity of divinities, Highest of the most high. May He bless you with His love, wisdom, power and peace !

By indiscriminate clinging to wife, children, house, wealth and property, you have forgotten all about your essential divine nature. In youth you are enveloped in ignorance ; in adult age you are entangled in the meshes of women ; in old age you are groaning under the burden of Samsara. When will you find time, friend, to do virtuous actions and worship God ?

Sensual pleasure is momentary, deceptive, illusory and imaginary. A grain of pleasure is mixed with a mountain of pain. Enjoyment cannot bring satisfaction of desires. On the contrary, it makes the mind more restless through intense craving. Sensual pleasure is the cause of births and deaths. It is an enemy of peace and knowledge.

Abandon these selfish struggles and schemes for amassing wealth. Do all actions with Nishkamya Bhav. March directly to that wire-puller (God), who is moving these toys of fleshy human bodies, who is keeping up this big show, who is behind this pageant. In Him only you will find everlasting happiness and perennial joy. Merge in Him by practising daily Japa and meditation.

Give up clinging to this illusory life. Take refuge in God. Develop lasting, sustained dispassion (Vairagya) or indifference to sensual enjoyments herein and hereafter. You have had countless fathers, mothers, wives and children in the past. You came alone. You will go alone. No one will follow you save your own actions. Worship God. Realise Him. All miseries will come to an end.

O Ram! Do you not wish to attain the illimitable kingdom of eternal bliss and perennial joy? Do you not long to attain everlasting peace and immortality? Do you not desire to dwell in that sweet abode of Brahman where there is neither pain nor sorrow, neither hunger nor thirst, neither fear nor grief, neither doubt nor delusion?

Then come, my beloved Ram! Develop real, lasting Vairagya (dispassion or mental non-attachment) by looking into the defects of sensual life (Dosha Drishti) and through association (Satsangh) with Sages, Sadhus and Sannyâsins. Serve. Love. Give. Be kind. Be good. Do good. Practise vigorous Japa and meditation and attain God-consciousness or Self-realisation (Brahma Gyana) in this very birth.

May you all possess that master key, Vairagya, to open the realms of Brahmic bliss!

May you all attain Kaivalya or Atma-swarajya or independence! May you all dwell in the immaculate Brahmic seat of ineffable splendour and glory!

## Live Wisely

Minus skin, minus dress, minus ornaments, physical beauty is nothing. Just imagine for a moment that the outer skin is removed. You will have to stand with a long stick to drive away crows and vultures. Physical beauty is superficial, illusory and fading. It is skin deep only. Do not be deluded by external appearances. It is the jugglery of Maya. Go to the source—Atma, the Beauty of beauties, the Everlasting Beauty.

If your hairs become grey, that is the first warrant from Lord Yama, the God of Death. You must get yourself ready to meet him. The wrinkles on the face and the bending of the body will remind you of the warrant. When the teeth fall and the eye-sight becomes dim, you must be fully prepared to greet him. You will get three hiccoughs or final passing of breaths lying on the bed. When the last hiccough comes, all your possessions will be taken away by your sons and partners. One will run after the savings bank pass book, another will take hold of the cash chest, the third, your provident fund papers and insurance claims, the fourth of the ornaments that lie on your person, and so on. Such is life on this earth plane. Why can't you see that the money is well spent for your spiritual pregress and the service of the poor and the Mahatmas? Friends! Try to attain immortality through devotion, meditation, purity, service, Japa, prayer and enquiry. All troubles and miseries will come to an end.

O Nectar's sons! Enough of this mundane life. Enough of this life of passion in this earth plane. You have spent your whole life energy and time in obtaining material wealth, power, name and fame. All your efforts have gone in vain. All your wealth is only a broken shell when compared with the inexhaustible or supreme wealth of Atma. Obtain this spiritual wealth. Give up this vain selfish struggle. You have walked too long with passionate eyes in this universe. Give up this lustful look. Meditate. Look within now and behold the marvellous Self and be free.

Atman or Brahman or Supreme Self is the hidden treasure. It is the pearl of incalculable value. It is the Jewel of jewels. It is the Gem of gems. It is the imperishable, inexhaustible, supreme wealth which no dacoit can rob. It is Chintamani of Chintamanis that will give man whatever he wishes.

Brahman is beyond speech, time and causation. It is limitless. It is tanquil and shines with equal effulgence in all bodies. It cannot be a particular thing. It is Chaitanya or pure consciousness. It is Vastu. It is Sat Chit Ananda.

Knowing the nature of Brahman or Atman as such, attain freedom or perfection. Think yourself as bodiless. Identify yourself with the supreme peace and eternal bliss of your all-pervading soul.

May you all lead the divine life, sharing what you have with others, singing Lords' name, rejoicing in Him alone and melting the mind in the Supreme Self !!

## Message of Brahmacharya

Brahmacharya is purity in thought, word and deed. Brahmacharya includes the control of not only the sex or reproductive Indriya but also other Indriyas. This is the definition of Brahmacharya in a broad sense. Brahmacharya is of two kinds, *viz.*, physical and mental. Physical, is control of body and the mental is control of evil thoughts. In mental Brahmacharya even a lustful thought will never enter the mind. Freedom from all sexual thoughts in waking as well as dreaming states is strict Brahmacharya.

The vital energy, the Veerya, which supports your life, is a great treasure for you. It is the quintessence of blood. Brahmacharya is truly a precious jewel. It is the most effective medicine or nectar which destroys diseases, decay and death. This Atma or immortal soul is verily the nature of Brahmacharya. Atma resides in Brahmacharya.

Veerya is the essence of life, thought, intelligence and consciousness. When the Veerya is once lost, it can never be recouped in your life-time by your taking any amount of Badam, nervine tonics, milk, cream, Makaradhwaja, etc. This fluid, when preserved carefully, serves as a master-key for you to open the doors of elysian bliss or the realms of God or Atma and for all sorts of higher achievements in life. By Brahmacharya alone, the Rishis of yore have conquered death and attained the Immortal Abode of Joy and Bliss.

You cannot have health and spiritual life without Brahmacharya. Brahmacharya is the keynote of success in every walk of life. Brahmacharya serves as a gateway for bliss beyond. It opens the door of Moksha (emancipation). Siddhis and Riddhis (psychic powers) roll under the feet of a Brahmacharin. Who can describe the majesty and glory of a Brahmachari? Brahmacharya or spotless chastity is the best of panaceas. There is nothing in this world that cannot be attained by a celibate. He can move the whole world.

Sensuality destroys life, lustre, strength, vitality, memory, wealth, fame, holiness and devotion to the

Supreme. Death is hastened by letting out the vital energy from the body. Life is saved and prolonged by preserving it. Those who have lost much of their Veerya or the vital energy become easily irritable and lazy. They easily succumb to any disease. They meet with premature death.

Have you realised, my dear friends, the importance and glory of Brahmacharya ? Have you recognised the true significance of Brahmacharya ? How can you expect to be strong and healthy if the precious energy that is acquired through various means with great difficulty is wasted daily ?

What do we find in these days ? Men and women, boys and girls are drowned in the ocean of impure thoughts, lustful desires and little sensual pleasures. It is highly deplorable indeed. Many college students have personally come to me and narrated their pitiable lives of gloom and depression brought about by heavy loss of semen through unnatural means. Persons are physically, mentally and morally debilitated because of the want of Brahmacharya or because of wasting the seminal power. Such persons become easily irritable for little things. They fall a victim to various diseases and premature death. I appeal to the parents, the teachers and the professors to instruct and guide their children in Brahmacharya at the proper time and save them. Through them the country is saved. Youths are the future hope of the country. If they are inspired the whole nation is inspired and elevated.

It is quite possible for a man to practise celibacy albeit there are various sorts of temptations and distractions. A well disciplined life, study of Scriptures, Sat Sangh, Japa, Dhyana, Sattvic diet, daily self-analysis, practice of Sadachara, and the three kinds of Tapas and such other spiritual discipline, pave a long way in the attainment of this end.

The practice of celibacy is not attended with any danger or any disease or any undesirable result, such as the various sorts of 'complex' which are wrongly attributed by the Western psychologists to it. They have no practical knowledge of the subject on hand. They have got a wrong ill-founded imagination that the ungratified sex energy assumes the various forms of complex in disguise, such as, touch-phobia etc. It is a morbid state of mind due to excessive anger, hatred, jealously, worry and depression brought about by various causes.

House-holders who are moderate in their sexual enjoyment, who are free from animal passion, who are desirous of progeny to keep up the line only, are also Brahmacharins. This is also Brahmacharya Vrita. As soon as a son or daughter is born, the wife becomes his mother

Do not look at obscene pictures. Do not speak vulgar words. Do not read novels that excite passion and produce ignoble, undesirable sentiments in the mind. Shun bad company. Do not go to Cinemas. Give up onions, garlic, hot curries, chutnies and spiced dishes. Take wholesome, bland Sattvic food. Transmute the sex-energy into spiritual energy (Ojas) by sublime thoughts, practice of Japa, Kirtan (singing God's name), Vichara or Atmic enquiry, Pranayama (restraint of breath), Sirshasan, Sarvangasan, study of Gita, Upanishads and other religious books. Have Sat Sangh—association with Mahatmas, Yogis and Sadhus. You will be established in Brahmacharya. There will be sublimation of sex-energy.

Glory to Brahmacharya! Glory to Brahmacharins who are veritable gods on earth! May you all attain immortality by leading a life of Brahmacharya or ideal divine life while remaining in the world !!

## Upadesamritam

In the name of Tapascharya (austerities) do not spoil your health. Constant repetition of "Vairagya Dindima" of Sri Sankara with feeling, study of "Vairagya Sataka" of Barthrihari and "Vairagya Prakarana" of Yoga Vasishta, reflection on the Slokas of Gita which treat of Vairagya and finding out the defects in the sensual life will surely intensify your Vairagya.

Spiritual growth is gradual. There is progressive evolution You should not be in a feverish hurry to accomplish great Yogic feats or enter into Nirvikalpa Samadhi (superconscious state) in two or three months. You will have to ascend the ladder of Yoga step by step. You will have to march in the spiritual path stage by stage.

This world is your best teacher. You will have yet to learn many lessons from this world. The worldly duties are not ties when done in the spirit of Nishkamya Karma Yoga (selfless service). You are not required to renounce the world and take shelter in the

Himalayan caves to claim back your lost divinity. The secret of renunciation is renunciation of egoism and desires. Live in the world but be not wordly-minded. He who, living in the midst of the temptations of this world, attains perfection, is a true hero indeed.

Guru's grace is needed by the disciple. This does not mean that the disciple should sit idle and expect a miracle from the Guru to push him directly into Samadhi. The Guru cannot do Sadhana or the spiritual practice for the student. He can guide the aspirant, clear his doubts, pave the way, remove snares, pitfalls and obstacles and throw light on the path. The disciple himself will have to place each footstep in the spiritual path. He will himself have to place his footstep in each rung of the ladder of Yoga.

Know things in their proper light. Do not be deluded Emotion is mistaken for devotion; violent jumping in the air during Sankirtan for divine ecstasy; falling down in swoon on account of exhaustion from too much jumping for Bhava Samadhi; Rajasic restlessness and motion for divine activities and Karma Yoga; Tamasic man for Sattvic man; movement of air in the back due to rheumatism for ascent of Kundalini; Tandra and deep sleep for Samadhi; Manorajya or building castles in the air for meditation; physical nudity for the Jivanmukti state.

Understand the laws of the universe. Move tactfully in this world. Learn the secrets of Nature. Try to know the best ways to control the mind. Conquer the mind. Conquest of mind is really conquest of nature and the world. Conquest of mind will enable you to go to the source of Brahman and you can realise: "I am the all-pervading Sat Chit Ananda Atman or the Self."

Learn to discriminate and become wise. Fight out the inner battle, again and again, and come out victorious, O Sushil!

May you all become dynamic Yogis and radiate joy and peace to all corners of the world!!

## Practical Spiritual Instructions

Thou art divine. Live up to it. Feel and realise thy divine nature. Do not murmur when you get difficulties, troubles, tribulations, and diseases. Every difficulty is an opportunity for you to develop your will and power of endurance and to grow strong. Conquer the difficulties one by one. This is the beginning of a new life, a life of expansion, glory and divine splendour. Aspire and draw. Grow. Expand. Build up all positive qualities, the Daivi Sampat, *viz.*, fortitude, patience and courage, that are dormant in you. Tread the spiritual path and realise: "I am the Immortal Self."

Never weep even if you lose your near and dear relations. Births and deaths are the two illusory scenes in the marvellous drama of this world. They are all the jugglery of Maya. In reality nobody comes and nobody goes. Atman alone exists. Atman is Brahman or the Immortal Soul.

Be hopeful always. Face all difficulties, tribulations and anxieties in life with a smile. Always repeat the formulae "Even this will pass away." You will then be always beyond grief and sorrow.

Pain is a blessing in disguise. Pain is an eye-opener. Pain is your silent teacher. Pain will turn your mind towards God. Many old Karmas have to be purged out quickly by the thirsting aspirant before he attains the blissful Samadhi (superconscious state). Therefore, the thirsting aspirant only will get more troubles. Become a spiritual warrior and chop off the thoughts and subtle forms of secret desires for enjoyment A glorious brilliant future is awaiting you.

Conquer difficulties one by one. Stand adamant. Root yourself in the immortal Sat Chit Ananda Atma or Self within. Develop a magnanimous, serene, calm and poised mental state. Sing "Anandoham, Anandoham—I am all bliss. I am all bliss."

To live is to fight for the ideal and goal. Life is conquest. Life is a series of awakenings. Conquer your mind and the senses. These are your real enemies. Live under life-long vows. Conquer your internal and external nature. Fight against the antagonistic dark evil forces through Japa and meditation.

If you are firm in your resolve to reach the highest goal of Yoga, if you have firm determination to attain the aim of spiritual life, you will rise up again and march forward even if you have a temporary fall. Feel the divine within you. Open yourself fully to the divine influence. Develop burning desire for the attainment of God consciousness and burning dispassion (Vairagya) for worldly enjoyments. Abandon all worldly ambitions and mundane desires. Soar high always in the realms of higher spiritual knowledge. Show your manliness, moral courage and spiritual strength now, O Ram!

Spiritual life is not mere idle talk. It is not mere sensation. It is actual living in Atma. It is a transcendental experience of unalloyed bliss.

May you all become immortal and drink deep the divine nectar of perennial joy and eternal bliss !!

## Love in God

Immortal Self,

There is a maker for a pot or a table. So, there must be a creator for this marvellous world also. That creator is GOD.

God is the wire-puller (Sutradhar) standing behind the machine of this world. He is the indweller of your heart. He presides over all actions (Karmadhyaksha). He is the dispenser of the fruits of your actions Live in God by singing His name, repeating His Mantra and surrendering the fruits of your actions unto Him.

The Lord abides in every creature. Behold the Lord in all objects, in all manifestations. He is in the breath, in the voice, in the eyes. He is the Life of your life, Soul of your soul. Make no distinction between a Hindu and a Mussalman, a Protestant and a Catholic, a Shaivite and a Vaishnavite.

Within you is the hidden God. Within you is the immortal soul. Within you is the inexhaustible spiritual treasure. Within you is the fountain of joy and happiness. Within you is the ocean of bliss. Look within for the happiness you have sought in vain in the perishable sensual objects. Rest peacefully in your own Atma and drink the nectar of immortality.

Insure your life with God. Depend upon Him alone. All other insurance companies will fail, but this Divine Company will never fail. You need not pay any premium to this Divine Company You will have to love God only. You will have to give Him only your heart.

Satyam (truth) is the seed. Brahmacharya (celibacy) is the root. Meditation is the shower. Shanti (peace) is the flower. Moksha (salvation) is the fruit. Therefore, speak truth. Practise Brahmacharya and meditation. Cultivate Shanti. You will surely attain the final emancipation or freedom from the trammels of births and deaths and enjoy eternal bliss, supreme peace, pernnial joy and immortality.

Surrender everything unto Him. Place your ego at His feet and be at ease. He will take complete charge of you. Let Him mould you in any way He likes. Let Him do exactly as He wills. He will remove all defects and weaknesses. He will play beautifully in this body flute. Hear the marvellous music of the flute of the Lord—the mysterious music of the soul– and rejoice.

Peace is a divine attribute. It is a quality of the soul. It cannot remain with greedy persons. It fills the pure heart. It is a sweet companion of sages and Yogis. It deserts the lustful. It runs away from the selfish. It is an ornament of a Paramahamsa.

"As you think, so you become." This is the immutable psychological law. Your thoughts make your life. You can choose your thoughts. You can choose your mode of thinking. You can make your life as you choose If you entertain evil thoughts, you will lead a miserable life. If you cultivate sublime thoughts, you will attain Godhead.

May you all prosper gloriously! May you all lead the divine life singing Hari's Name, serving the poor and the sick with Atma Bhav, sharing what you have with others and melting the mind in the Lord through silent meditation !!

## Universal Love

The only Sara Vastu in this world is Prem or love. It is eternal, infinite and undecaying. Physical love is passion or Moha or infatuation. Universal love is divine love. Cosmic love, Viswa Prem, universal love are synonymous terms. God is love. Love is God. Selfishness, greed, egoism, vanity, pride and hatred, contract the heart and stand in the way of developing universal love.

Develop universal love gradually through selfless service, Sat-sangh (association with Mahatmas), prayer, recitation of Guru Mantra, etc. When the heart is contracted through selfishness, man loves his wife, children, a few friends and relatives only, in the beginning. As he evolves, he loves the people of his own district, then the people of his own province. Later on, he develops love for men of his own country.

Eventually, he begins to love people of different countries. In the long run, he begins to love all. He develops universal love. All the barriers are broken now. Heart expands infinitely.

It is very easy to talk of universal love. But when you want to put it in actual practice, it becomes extremely difficult. Petty-mindedness of all sorts comes in the way. Old, wrong Samskaras (impressions) which you have created by your wrong mode of life in the past, act as stumbling blocks. Through iron determination, strong will-power, patience, perseverance and Vichar (right enquiry), you can conquer all obstacles quite easily. The grace of the Lord will descend on you if you are sincere, my dear friends !

Universal love terminates in Adwaitic unity or oneness or Upanishadic consciousness of Seers and Sages. Pure love is a great leveller. It brings equality. Hafiz, Kabir, Mira, Gouranga, Tukaram, Ramdas, all have tasted this universal love. What others have achieved, you can also attain.

Feel that the whole world is your body, your own home. Melt or destroy all barriers that separate man from man. Idea of superiority is ignorance or delusion. Develop Viswaprem, all-embracing love. Unite with all. Separation is death. Unity is eternal life. Feel that the whole world is Viswabrindavan. Feel that this body is a moving temple of God. Wherever you are, whether at home, office, railway station or market, feel that you are in the temple. Consecrate every act as an offering unto the Lord. Transmute every work into Yoga by offering its fruits to God. Have Akarta, Sakshi Bhav, if you are a student of Vedanta. Have Nimitta Bhav, if you are a student of Bhakti Marga. Feel that all beings are images of God. *Isa Vasyamidam Sarvam*—this world is indwelt by the Lord. Feel that one power or God works through all hands, sees through all eyes, hears through all ears. You will become a changed being. You will enjoy the highest peace and bliss.

May Lord Hari take you all to His bosom and bathe you with the waters of sweet love !

May your heart be filled with cosmic love !!

## Practice of Meditation

Meditation is the only royal road to the attainment of salvation or Moksha. Meditation kills all pains, sufferings, the three kinds of Tapas (fevers) and the five Kleshas (sorrows). Meditation gives the vision of unity. Meditation produces sense of oneness Meditation is an aeroplane that helps the aspirant to soar high in the realms of eternal bliss and everlasting peace. It is a mysterious ladder that connects earth and heaven and takes the aspirant to the immortal abode of Brahman.

Meditation is the continuous flow of one thought of God or Atma, like the continuous flow of oil from one vessel to another (Tailadharavat). Meditation follows concentration.

Practise meditation in the early morning from 4 to 6 (Brahma Muhurta). This is the best time for the practice of meditation.

Sit on Padma or Siddha or Sukha Asan. Keep the head, neck and the trunk in a straight line. Concentrate either on the Trikute—the space between the two eye-brows—or in the heart, with closed eyes.

Meditation is of two kinds, *viz.*, Saguna Dhyana (concrete meditation) and Nirguna Dhyana (abstract meditation). In concrete meditation the Yogic student meditates on the form of Sri Krishna, Rama, Sita, Vishnu, Siva, Gayatri or Devi. In abstract meditation he meditates on his own Self or Atma.

Place the picture of Lord Hari with Chathurbhuja in front of you. Gaze at this picture steadily for five minutes, then close the eyes and visualise the picture. During visualisation move the mind on the various parts of Vishnu. See with the mind His feet first, then in the following order : His legs, His yellow silk cloth, His golden necklace set with Kaustubha gem on the breast, the ear-ring Makara Kundala, then the face, then the crown on the head, then the disc in the right upper hand, then the conch in the left upper hand, then the mace in the lower right hand, then the lotus in the lower left hand. Then come down to the feet and repeat the process again and again. Finally fix the mind either at the feet or the face. Repeat the Mantra mentally : 'Hari Om' or 'Om Namo Narayanaya'. Think of the attributes of the Lord such as Omnipotence, Omnipresence, Purity, etc.

Meditate on Om and its meaning with feeling. This is Nirguna Dhyana. Repeat Om mentally. Identify yourself with Atma. Feel, "I am the all-pervading immortal Self or Atman. I am Sat Chit Ananda

Brahman. I am Sakshi or silent witness of three states and all modifications of the mind. I am pure consciousness. I am distinct from the body, mind, Prana and senses. I am the self luminous Light of lights. I am the Eternal Supreme Soul."

If you have contentment, cheerfulness, patience, unruffled state of mind, sweet voice, one pointedness of mind, light body, fearlessness, desirelessness, disgust for worldly things, know that you are advancing in the spiritual path and that you are nearing God.

Be regular in your meditation. Regularity is the key to success. Regularity is of paramount importance. May you all be established in Samadhi (superconscious state of bliss) through regular meditation ! !

## Thy Real Nature

Religion is faith for knowing and worshipping God. It is not a matter for discussion on a club table. It is the perception and realisation of the True Self. It is the fulfilment of the deepest craving in man. Therefore, hold religion as the goal of your life. Live every second of your life for its realisation. Life without religion is real death.

Analyse your thoughts. Scrutinize your motives. Remove selfishness. Calm the passions. Control the Indriyas. Destroy egoism. Serve and love all. Purify your heart. Cleanse the dross of your mind. Hear and reflect. Concentrate and meditate. Attain Self-realisation.

There is something dearer than wealth. There is something dearer than your wife. There is something dearer than your children. There is something dearer than your life itself. That dearest something is thy own Self (Atma)—Inner Ruler (Antaryamin), Immortal (Amritam). This Immortal Self can be realised by incessant practice of meditation.

Hey Saumya! Dear Immortal Self! Be bold: Be cheerful, even though you are in the role of unemployment, though you have nothing to eat, though you are clad in rags. Thy essential nature is Sat Chit Ananda. The outer cloak, this mortal physical sheath is an illusory production of Maya. Smile, whistle, laugh, jump, dance in joy and ecstasy. Sing Om Om Om! Ram Ram Ram! Come out of this cage of flesh. Thou art sexless Atma. Thou art that Atma who dwells in the chambers of your heart. Act as such. Feel as such. Claim your birthright, not from to-morrow or the day after, but right now from this very second. "*Tat Twam Asi*—Thou art That." Feel, Assert, Recognise, Realise, my beloved Ram.

Find out your centre. Dwell always in this centre. This centre is the abode of Supreme Bliss and Eternal Sunshine. This centre is the Param Dham or Paramangati or Supreme Goal. This centre is your sweet original home, the abode of immortality and and fearlessness. This centre is Atma or Brahman. This is the Imperishable Brahmic seat of ineffable splendour and glory!!

## Divine Life

Divine life is life in God or the Immortal Soul. He who leads the divine life is free from cares, worries, anxieties, miseries, suffering and tribulations. He attains immortality, perfection, freedom, independence, eternal peace, supreme bliss and perennial joy. He radiates joy, peace and light everywhere.

To lead the divine life, you need not retire into forests. You can lead the divine life, while remaining in the world. What is wanted is renunciation of egoism, mineness, attachment, Vasanas and Trishnas Give the mind to God and the hands to the service of humanity.

Serve humanity with Atma Bhav. Serve the poor. Serve the sick with Narayana Bhav. Serve the society. Serve the country. Selfless service is the highest Yoga. Samadhi will come by itself without any effort for one, who is solely absorbed in service, when his heart is purified. Service is worship of the Lord. Never forget this. He who sees Brahman or the Immortal Soul in the spoon, Brahman in the medicine, Brahman in the patient, Brahman in the doctor, Brahman in service, he who thinks or meditates thus, while doing service, verily reaches Brahman or the Eternal.

The practice of Brahmacharya is very important for spiritual progress. Brahmacharya is the basis for acquiring immortality. It is itself divine life. Brahmacharya brings meterial progress and psychic advancement. It is a substratum for a life of peace in Atma. It is a potent weapon for controlling the internal Rajasic forces, *viz.*, Kama, Krodha, Lobha, etc. It gives tremendous energy and gigantic will power and good Vichara Shakti.

Japa is an important Anga or Yoga or divine life. A Mantra is divinity. Japa is the repetition of the Mantra or the names of the Lord. In Kali Yuga, practice of Japa alone can give eternal peace, bliss and immortality. Japa ultimately results in Samadhi or communion with the Lord.

Sankirtan is the singing of Lord's names with faith and devotion. When you sing His names, feel that Lord Hari or Ishta Devata is seated in your heart, that every name of the Lord is filled with divine potencies, that the old vicious Samskaras and Vasanas are burnt by the power of the name and that the mind is filled with Sattva or purity, that Rajas and Tamas are completely destroyed, and that the veil of ignorance is torn down. This kind of mental attitude brings the maximum benefit of Sankirtan. It is not the number of Japa or the length of time of Kirtan that counts for spiritual growth but it is the intensity of Bhav with which the Lord's names are sung.

## Divine Message

Pure as the snow of the Himalayas, bright as sunlight, expansive as the sky, all-pervading as the ether, unfathomable as the ocean, cool as the waters of the Ganges, is the Immortal Atma—the substratum for this world, body, mind and Prana. Nothing is sweeter than this Atma.

Purify your heart and meditate. Plunge deep in your heart. Dive deep into the innermost recess. You will find it. Only if you search in deep water, you will find the pearl of Atma. If you keep to the shore, you will find broken shells only.

The best flower that can be offered to the Lord is your heart. Penetrate more deeply into the infinite domain of Kailas, the kingdom of illimitable bliss and boundless joy and peace within.

Just as the light is burning within the hurricane lantern, so also, the divine light is burning within the heart. You can behold the divine light through your inner third eye or the eye of intuition by withdrawing the senses and stilling the mind.

It takes a long time for charcoal to catch fire but gunpowder can be ignited within the twinkling of an eye. Even so, it takes a long time for igniting the fire of knowledge for a man whose heart is impure. But an aspirant with great purity of heart gets knowledge of the Self, within the twinkilng of an eye, within the time taken to squeeze a flower by the fingers.

Armed with patience, perseverance, tranquillity and courage, slowly ascend peak after peak, subdue the Indriyas one by one, control the thoughts one by one, eradicate the Vasanas one by one and eventually reach the summit of Self realisation or Divine Glory.

O friend! Wake up. Sleep no more. Meditate. It is Brahma Muhurta now. Open the gate of the temple of the Lord in your heart with the key of love.

Hear the music of the soul. Sing the song of Perm to your beloved. Play the melody of the Infinite. Melt your mind in His contemplation. Unite with Him. Immerse yourself in the ocean of Love and Bliss.

## Self Analysis

Daily self-analysis or self examination is indispensably requisite. Then alone can you remove your defects and can grow rapidly in spirituality. A gardener watches the young plants very carefully. He removes the weeds daily. He puts a strong fence around them. He waters them at the proper time. Then alone they grow beautifully and yield fruits quickly. Even so, you should find out your defects through daily introspection and self-analysis, and then eradicate them through suitable methods. If one method fails, you must adopt a combined method. If prayer fails, you should take recourse to Sat-sang or association with the wise, Pranayama, meditation, dietetic regulation, enquiry, etc. You should destroy not only big waves of pride, hypocrisy, lust, anger, etc., that manifest on the surface of the conscious mind, but also their subtle impresions which lurk in the corners of the sub-conscious mind. Then only are you perfectly safe.

These subtle impressions are very dangerous. They lurk like thieves and attack you when you are napping, when, you are not vigilant, when your dispassion wanes, when you slacken a bit your daily spiritual practice, and when you are provoked. If these defects do not manifest even under extreme provocation on several occasions, even when you are not practising daily introspection and self-analysis, you can be rest assured the subtle impressions also are obliterated. Now you are safe. The practice of introspection and self-analysis demands patience, perseverance, leech-like tenacity, application, iron will, iron determination subtle intellect, courage, etc. But you will gain a fruit of incalculable value. The precious fruit is immortality. Supreme Peace and Infinite Bliss You will have to pay a heavy price for this. Therefore you should not murmur when you do daily practice. You should apply your full mind, heart, intellect and soul to spiritual practice. Then only rapid success is possible.

Keep daily spiritual diary and practice self-analysis (self-examination) at night. Note down how many good actions you have done, what mistakes you have committed during the course of the day. In the morning resolve : "I will not yield to anger to-day. I will practise celibacy to-day. I will speak truth to-day.

## Importance of keeping a Spiritual Diary

The keeping up of a daily spiritual diary is an indispensable requisite and of paramount importance. Those who are already in the habit of keeping it know its incalculable advantages. A diary is a whip for goading the mind towards God. It shows the way to freedom and eternal bliss. It is your Guru. It is the eye-opener. It develops the Manana Shakti or the power of reflection. It will help you to destroy all your evil qualities and to be regular in your spiritual practices. If you regularly maintain a diary, you will get solace, peace of mind and quick progress in the spiritual path. Those who desire to grow in morality and spirituality, those who wish to evolve rapidly must keep a daily record of their actions.

All great men of the world keep diaries. The life of Benjamin Franklin is known to you all. He kept a daily diary. He noted down the number of untruths and wrong actions for which he was responsible during the course of the day. In course of time, he became a perfect man. He had perfect control over his mind. Mahatma Gandhi advises the students to keep a daily diary always.

A big thief is hiding himself in your brain. He has snatched away your Atmic pearl. He is giving you immense worries and troubles. He is deluding you. The thief is your mind. You must not be lenient towards him. You must kill him ruthlessly. There is no other sword sharper than this diary to kill him. It checks his happy-go-lucky ways and destroys him eventually. All your daily mistakes will be corrected. A good time will come when you will be entirely free from anger, untruth, lust, etc. You will become a perfect Yogi.

Your father and mother gave you this body. They gave you food and clothing. But this diary is superior to your parents. It shows the way to freedom and eternal bliss. It gives you solace, satisfaction and peace of mind. Turn the pages of your diary carefully once a week. If you can record your actions every hour, your growth will be very rapid. Happy is the man who keeps a daily diary for he is very near to God. He has a strong will and he is free from defects and mistakes.

By keeping a spiritual diary you can then and there rectify your mistakes. You can do more Sadhan and evolve quickly. There is no other best friend and faithful teacher or Guru than your diary. It will teach you the value of time. At the end of every month calculate the total number of hours you spent in Japa, study of religious books, Pranayam Asanas, sleep, etc. Then you will be able to know how much time you are spending for religious purposes. You have got every chance to increase the period of Japa, meditation, etc., gradually. If you maintain a daily diary properly, without any fault in any of the items, you will not like to waste even a single minute unnecessarily. Then alone will you understand the value of time and how it slips away.

Compare the total of the last month with those of the privious months. Find out whether you have progressed in your Sadhan or not. If you have not progressed, increase your practice daily. You can do more Sadhan and evolve quickly.

In maintaining a diary, you should not utter any falsehood anywhere. You are keeping it only for your own benefit. It is the diary of a religious aspirant who is treading the path of truth to realise Truth. Acknowledge your faults openly and endeavour to rectify yourself in future. You should not neglet to record everything in your diary. It is better if you compare the progress of your work of the present week with that of the previous week. If you are not able to do so once a week, you must at any cost compare it once a month. Then you will be able to make various adjustments in different items, increase the period of Japa and meditation and decrease the time of sleep.

Self-punishment consists in giving up the night meals and in doing fifty Malas of Japa more than the usual number. The filling in of the form should not be a mere routine work. The annexed form is only a specimen for guidance. These items should be copied on a foolscap size paper neatly with columns drawn for all the days of the month.

Do not be ashamed to mention your mistakes, vices and failures. This is meant only for your own progress. Do not waste your precious hours. It is enough that you have wasted so many years in idle gossipping. Enough, enough of the troubles you had all these days in satisfying your senses. Do not say, "From to-morrow, I will be regular." That "to-morrow" will never come. Be sincere and start doing Sadhan from this moment. If you are really sincere, He is ever ready to help you and give you a push in your spiritual march.

He who regulates his life on the above lines is sure to become a Jivanmukta or a Yogi in this very birth. Do it practically and see how you grow. Start maintaining a spiritual diary from this moment itself and realise the marvellous results.

## Spiritual Diary

### 1. When did you get up from bed ?

"Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise." You must get up at 4 A.M., and practise Japa and meditation. The meditative state of the mind will come by itself without exertion at this period.

### 2. How many hours did you sleep ?

Sleep for six hours is quite sufficient for every individual. Go to bed at 10 P.M., and get up at 4 A.M. Napoleon Bonaparte believed in only four hours of sleep. Too much sleep makes a man dull and lethargic Too much sleep causes premature decay and weakens the brain power. Those spiritual aspirants who want to do rigorous Sadhana should reduce the sleep gradually. For three months reduce the sleep by half an hour. During the next three months go to bed at 11 P.M. and get up at 4 A.M. In this way you can conquer sleep and become one like Arjuna or Lakshmana.

### 3. How many Malas of Japa ?

Japa is an important limb of Yoga. In this Kali Yuga, Japa and Kirtan are effective Sadhanas for God-realisation. Japa results in Samadhi or communion with God. Japa is the repetition of the name of the Lord. There are three varieties of Japa, *viz.*, Vaikhari (verbal), Upansu (whispering) and Manasic (mental). Have a Japamala (rosary) in your neck or pocket or underneath your pillow at night. Use a Mala of 108 beads. A Mala is a whip to goad the mind towards God.

The fruits of Manasic Japa are ten thousand times more than Vaikhari or Upansu. Always try to do mental Japa when you are busy in daily activities. Make it a point to repeat the Mantra some thousand times and record the number in the diary.

### 4. How long in Kirtan ?

Repetition of God's name enables the devotee to feel the divine presence, the divine glory and the divine consciousness within himself and also everywhere. How powerful is God's name ! When one sings his name or hears its sound, he is unconsciously raised to sublime spiritual heights. He loses his body consciousness. He is immersed in joy and drinks deep the divine nectar of immortality. Sankirtan is singing God's name with Bhav and Prem or divine feeling. Sankirtan brings Darshan of God or attainment of divine consciousness easily in this Kali Yuga.

### 5. How many Pranayams ?

Pranayama is 'control of breath.' Sit in Padmasan, Sukhasan, or any other comfortable pose, with an empty stomach. Close your eyes. Close the right nostril with the thumb. Draw in the air very very slowly through the left nostril. Now close your left nostril with the little and ring fingers, and retain the breath as long as you can comfortably keep. Then very very slowly exhale through the right nostril after removing the thumb. Again draw in the air through the right nostril, retain it as long as you can and exhale through the left nostril very slowly. This is one Pranayama. To start with, do five Pranayams in the morning and evening and gradually increase to 10 or 20. This is Sukhapurvak—easy, comfortable Pranayama.

### 6. How long did you perform Asans ?

Asan is the first stage of Ashtanga Yoga. Padmasan and Siddhasan are intended for doing Japa and meditation. Do not often change the Asan. Stick to one and gradually increase the period to even three hours. Shirsasan, Sarvangasan and other exercises are intended for maintaining good health. They remove various diseases. These Asans will awaken the Kundalini Shakti. Perform the Asans when the stomach is empty or light. Early morning and evening are very good for the practice of Asans. Practise the Asan in well ventilated room or on the sandy beds of rivers, open airy places, or sea-side. During the practice repeat your Ishta or Guru Mantra.

### 7. How long did you meditate in one Asan ?

Sit in Padmasan or Sukhasan in your meditation room. Early morning between 4 and 6 A.M., is the best period for contemplation and Japa. You can have another sitting in the night also. Take your seat before the picture of your Ishta Devata. Look at the picture steadily for a few minutes. Repeat some Stotras mentally. Then close your eyes and visualise the picture. Repeat the Ishta Mantra mentally. Sit for meditation for half an hour in the beginning and try to increase the period to three hours by gradual daily practice. When you sit on your Asan for meditation, do not shake the body. Try to keep up one current of thought of God.

8. How many Gita Slokas you read or got by heart ?

Study of Scriptures is Kriya Yoga or Niyama. It purifies the heart and fills the mind with sublime and elevating thoughts. Gita is a unique book for Swadhyaya. It contains the essence of all the Yogas and the cream of the Vedas. You can devote half an hour to three hours for this purpose according to the time at your disposal.

9. How long in the company of the wise (Satsangh) ?

The glory and power of Satsangh or association with the wise, Saints, Yogis, Sannyasins and Mahatmas, is described in detail in Bhagwatha, Ramayan and other holy Scriptures. Even a moment's company is quite sufficient to overhaul the old vicious Samskaras of the people. Service to Mahatmas purifies the minds of passionate men rapidly. Satsangh elevates the mind to magnanimous heights. Study of books written by realised persons will also tantamount to Satsangh.

10. How many hours did you observe Mowna ?

Mowna means vow of silence. Energy is wasted in idle talking and gossiping. Mowna develops will power. Mowna checks the impulse of speech. It is a great help for the observance of truth and control of anger. Emotions are controlled and irritability vanishes. Observe Mowna at least for one hour or two hours a day. During Mowna, sublime thoughts should be replaced for worldly thoughts and Japa should be done.

11. How long in disinterested selfless service ?

The practice of Nishkama Karma Yoga destroys sins and impurities of the mind and causes Chitta Shuddhi or purity of Antahkarana. Knowledge of Self dawns on a pure mind. Knowledge of Self is the only direct means to freedom. Nishkama Karma Yoga is selfless service unto humanaity. The important point is to serve the humanity without any attachment or egoism. The central teaching of the Gita is non-attachment to work. Sri Krishna says: "Work incessantly. Your duty is to work but not to expect the fruits thereof." Do vigorous service for some time. You will grasp the spirit of Nishkama Karma.

### 12. How much did you give in charity ?

When you walk along the road or street, keep always some loose coins in your pocket and distribute them to the poor. Be liberal. Feel that you are enjoying in all the bodies. Your heart will expand. You will begin to realise unity or oneness. You will become more generous. Do regular chariry of one-tenth of your income. Performance of virtuous actions is the beginning of spiritual life.

### 13. How many Mantras you wrote ?

Maintain a Mantra note-book. Write your Ishta Mantra, Guru Mantra or Maha Mantra for half an hour in this note-book. You should preferably do this item of Sadhan just before the commencement of household duties. You should observe Mowna or silence while writing the Mantra. There should be perfect clam and quietitude. You should concentrate on the writing alone. In Mantra writing, the eyes, the hands and the mind are all engaged. There is no restriction of language. If this practice is continued with sincerity, the aspirant gets concentration easily and much internal peace and happiness.

**14. How long did you practise physical exercise ?**

Physical culture or the development of the body is as much important as the development of the mind, will, or memory. If the body is not kept strong and healthy, vigorous and active, no culture is possible. "*Men sana corpora sona*" is a wise saying which means—a sound mind in a sound body. There are different kinds of physical culture. You will have to select one according to your capacity, taste and temperament.

**15. How many lies you told and with what self-punishment ?**

Srutis emphatically declare : "*Satyam Vada*"—"Speak the Truth." "*Satyameva jayate Nanritam*—"Truth alone triumphs but not falsehood." A truthful man is absolutely free from worries and anxieties. He has a calm mind. He is respected by all. If you observe speaking the truth for twelve years, you will have Vak-Siddhi. Then whatever you speak will come to pass. Spek the truth. Truth is Knowledge. Truth is Bliss. Truth guides you in all your actions. Write in bold types the words : "Speak Truth" on card boards and hang them in different places in your house. This will remind you when you speak a lie. You will check yourself at once. Punish youreslf by fasting if you tell a lie and record the lies in the diary. Gradually the number of lies will decrease and you will become a truthful man.

### 16. How many times and how long of anger and with what self-punishment ?

Anger is an enemy to peace It is a modification of lust. When a desire is not gratified, a man becomes angry. He loses his memory and understanding. Control anger by the practice of Kshama, love and killing egoism. Drink a little water when you become angry. It will cool the brain and calm the excited nerves. Repeat "Om Shanti" several times. If you find it extremely difficult to control anger, leave the place immediately and take a walk for half an hour. Pray to God. Do Japa Meditation gives immense strength to destroy anger and other obstacles.

### 17. How many hours you spent in usless company ?

The so-called friends are real enemies. You cannot find even a single unselfish friend in this universe. Be careful. Friends come to have idle talks with you and they waste your time. They want to pull you down and make you also wordly. Do not be carried away by the flowery speech of such friends. Cut off connection ruthlessly. Live alone at all times. Trust in that immortal friend who dwells in your heart. He will give you whatever you want If you cannot have positive Satsangh of Mahatmas, have negative Satsangh with books written by realised Sages, Saints and Bhagwatas.

### 18. How many times you failed in Brahmacharya ?

No spiritual progress is possible without the practice of celibacy Veerya is a dynamic force. It should be converted into Ojas Shakti Those who are very eager to have God realisation should observe unbroken celibacy strictly. Observe the vow of Brahmacharya strictly.

### 19. How long in study of religious books ?

Be regular in the study of religious books, Ramayana, Bhagawatha, Yoga Vasishta and other good books, for Swadhyaya. If you reflect on the ideas of Gita and fix the mind on these ideas, this itself is a form of lower Samadhi. Swadhyaya is an auxiliary for concentration. Swadhyaya will check mind-wandering also.

### 20. How many times you failed in the control of evil habits and with what self-punishment ?

There are some who are unconscious of their bad habits and many who do not recognise them as bad. If they recognise them to be bad, then the correction is very simple. Alcohol is a strong devil which, if it once enters the system of a man, will never leave him. Then comes smoking. Another evil habit is betel-chewing. Drinking of strong tea and coffee often develops a bad habit. Novel reading, visiting cinemas, sleeping in the day time, using slang terms and abuses, etc., are some of the evil habits. First realise that you have got an evil habit and intensely desire that you should give it up at any cost. Then your success has already come. Giving up any bad habit at once is better. Use your sub-conscious mind for eradication. Establish new healthy habits and develop your will. There is nothing impossible under the Sun.

### 21. How long you concentrated on your Ishta Devata (Saguna or Nirguna Dhyana) ?

Concentration can be done only if you are free from all distractions. Concentration on anything that appeals to you as good or anything which the mind likes best The mind should be trained to concentrate on gross subjects in the beginning, and later on, you can successfully concentrate on subtle objects and abstract ideas. Regularity in the practice is of paramount importance.

*Gross Form :*—Concentrate on a Black dot on the wall or a candle flame, a bright star, moon, on the pictute of Om, Lord Siva, Rama, Krishna, Devi, or your Ishta Devata in front of you with open eyes.

*Subtle Forms :*—Sit before the picture of your Ishta Devata and close your eyes. Keep a mental picture of your Ishta Devata at the space between the two eye-brows, or heart (Anahatha Chakra) ; concentrate on Muladhara, Anahata, Ajna or any other internal Chakra; concentrate on the divine qualities such as, love, mercy, or any other abstract ideas, Sat Chit Ananda, purity, perfection, peace.

### 22. How many days you observed fast and vigil.

Keeping wide awake throughout the night is called vigil. You will derive incalculable benefit if you practise vigil on Vaikunta Ekadasi, Sivaratri, Gokul-ashtami day – the birth day of Sri Krishna. Complete fasting helps to control the sleep. Control of sleep by taking recoures to tea is not desirable. You will not gain spiritual strength as you depend upon an extraneous drug. During fasting avoid company. Live alone. Utilise your time in Yogic Sadhan. After a fast, do not take any heavy food. Milk or some fruit juice is beneficial.

23. Were you regular in your meditation ?

Never miss a day in meditation. Be regular and systematic. Regularity in meditation is of paramount importance. The meditative state will come by itself at the appointed time. Take Sattvic food. Fruits and milk will help mental focussing. When the mind is tired, do not concentrate, Give it a little rest.

24. What virtues are you developing ?

Develop that virtue in which you are hopelessly lacking. Courage, mercy, universal love, nobility, Kshama, contentment, frankness and honesty, must be developed one by one. Take up one virtue every month and meditate on that virtue regularly. You will manifest that virtue in your character. If you develop one important virtue, all other virtues will cling to you. If you have humility and courage, all other virtues will come of their own accord. You should spend daily some time, say half an hour, for development of virtues.

25. What evil quality are you trying to eradicate ?

The development of virtuous qualities will itself remove the negative qualities. But it is better to make a positive attempt also in the eradication of the evil qualities. Then the progress will be rapid. It is a double attack on the enemy. If you remove lust or anger or egoism, all other evil qualities will disappear by themselves. All evil qualities are the attendants of egoism. All vices originate from anger. If these are destroyed, all sorts of vices will vanish. Therefore concentrate your attention in killing egoism or anger.

### 26. Which Indriya is troubling you most ?

Discipline of the Indriyas is a very important point. If the Indriyas are turbulent, you cannot have concentration. Watch every Indriya carefully and curb it by suitable methods, such as, fasting, Mowna, Tratak, celibacy, renunciation of articles, Dama and Pratyahara. Curbing of Indriyas means curbing of mind. They cannot do any independent work without the direct help of the mind. Celibacy checks the genitals ; Mowna will control the organ of speech ; Tratak controls the eyes. Sufficient practice for a long time is necessary. Then the Indriyas become emaciated and thin and they are starved to death.

### 27. When did you go to bed ?

Sleep is nature's tonic for healthy living. The more sound sleep one has, the more healthy he would be. Hours of sleep depend upon your physical or mental capacity for resisting fatigue. Without a sufficiency of sleep, you will not have efficiency. The amount of sleep required varies with age, temperament and amount of work. According to an old adage, there should be six hours' sleep for a man, seven for a woman and eight for a fool. As age advances, people require more sleep. Avoid going late to bed. Do not take drugs to induce sleep. If you do not get sleep, take a brisk walk in the open air for fifteen minutes and then go to bed. You will have refreshing sleep.

# THE SPIRITUAL DIARY
## (WEEKLY)

**A Spiritual Diary is a whip for goading the mind towards righteousness and God. If you regularly maintain a diary, you will get solace, peace of mind and quick progress in the spiritual path. Maintain a daily diary and realise the marvellous results.**

| No. | Questions. | Month ..................... | | | | | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 1. | When did you get up from bed ? | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | How many hours did you sleep ? | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | How many *Malas of Japa* ? | | | | | | | | |
| 4. | How long in *Kirtan* ? | | | | | | | | |
| 5. | How many *Pranayamas* ? | | | | | | | | |
| 6. | How long did you perform *Asans* ? | | | | | | | | |
| 7. | How long did you meditate in one *Asana* ? | | | | | | | | |
| 8. | How many *Gita Slokas* did you read or get by heart ? | | | | | | | | |
| 9. | How long in the company of the wise (*Satsanga*) ? | | | | | | | | |
| 10. | How many hours did you observe *Mouna* ? | | | | | | | | |
| 11. | How long in disinterested selfless service ? | | | | | | | | |
| 12. | How much did you give in charity ? | | | | | | | | |
| 13. | How many *Mantras* you wrote ? | | | | | | | | |
| 14. | How long did you practise physical exercise ? | | | | | | | | |
| 15. | How many lies did you tell and with what self-punishment ? | | | | | | | | |
| 16. | How many times and how long of anger and with what self-punishment? | | | | | | | | |
| 17. | How many hours you spent in useless company ? | | | | | | | | |
| 18. | How many times you failed in *Brahmacharya* ? | | | | | | | | |
| 19. | How long in study of religious books ? | | | | | | | | |
| 20. | How many times you failed in the control of evil habits and with what self-punishment ? | | | | | | | | |
| 21. | How long you concentrated on your *Ishta Devata* (*Saguna or Nirguna Dhyana*) ? | | | | | | | | |
| 22. | How many days did you observe fast and vigil ? | | | | | | | | |
| 23. | Were you regular in your meditation ? | | | | | | | | |
| 24. | What virtue are you developing ? | | | | | | | | |
| 25. | What evil quality are you trying to eradicate ? | | | | | | | | |
| 26 | Which *Indriya* is troubling you most ? | | | | | | | | |
| 27. | When did you go to bed ? | | | | | | | | |

*Name*..................................

*Address*..................................

*Signature.*

*DETAILED EXPLANATION OF THE ITEMS ARE GIVEN IN PAGES 64—76.*

## Wisdom Nectar

Absolute is the only reality.
Achieve perfection through meditation.
Act with faith and determination.
Always wear a Kowpeen or Langottee.
Bear misery and pain with a cool mind.
Become a fully illumined Gyani
Be established in Adwaita Brahma Nishta.
Be ever vigilant and diligent.
Be good. Do good. Be kind. Be pure.
Be in tune with the divine life.
Brahmacharya is divine life.
Brahman is real. World is unreal.
Call nothing as your own.
Censure and criticism are jugglery of words.
Change your old habits and ways.
Come out of the cage of flesh and bones.
Destroy all the pleasure centres.
Destroy the slave mentality.
Do not cling to any name and form.
Do not depend upon servants.
Don't give leniency to the mind.
Don't go to extremes in Sadhana.
Do not trespass the laws of health.
Enjoy the life transcendent.
Enquire "Who am I ?"
Feel your oneness everywhere.
Follow the injunctions of the Vedas.
Freedom is thy birth-right.
Friends are your real enemies.
Give up clinging to illusory life.

Give your hands to work and mind to God.
Goal of life is Self-realisation.
Hate lust but not women.
Have a rosary always in your neck.
Heart is the golden temple of God.
Hear. Reflect. Meditate. Realise.
Hear the divine whisper in silence.
Human love is all hollow.
Identify yourself with the Supreme Self.
Introspect and remove your defects.
Keep the mind fully occupied.
Know thyself and be free.
Lead a simple natural life.
Live in God (Atma).
Meditate and abide in the Self.
Never fail to fulfil your duties.
Never wrestle with the mind.
Non-essentials differ in all religions.
Persevere plod on in Sadhana.
Practise Ahimsa, Satyam and Brahmacharya.
Prepare yourself for a divine life.
Preserve Veerya—the vital force.
Remember saints and draw inspiration.
Selfishness clouds the understanding.
Serve. Love. Give.
Service is worship.
Serve the poor and the sick.
Shun all sorts of sensual enjoyments.
Shun comforts and conveniences.
"*Tat Twam Asi*—Thou art That." Realise this and be free.
There is no power greater than love.

Thou art a pilgrim here.
Time is fleeting.
Trust not the Indriyas (senses) and the mind.
Turn the mind away from objects.
Utilise every second profitably.
Wake up from the slumber of ignorance.
Walk in the path of Dharma.
Watch every thought very carefully.
World is long dream—an illusion.
Worship God in the poor and the sick.
Your everlasting abode is Brahman.

### Essence of Sadhana

Annihilate egoism.
Become a Maha Mowni.
Become humble.
Behold the Self everywhere.
Be kind to all.
Be on the alert.
Check the wandering mind.
Control anger.
Cultivate magnanimity.
Decide correctly.
Destroy Sankalpas.
Develop nobility.
Discipline the senses.
Do rigorous Tapas.
Entertain sublime thoughts.
Have Sat-sangh.
Identify the Supreme Self.
Live in one place.
Merge deep in the Self within.

Practise purity.
Prostrate before all.
Realise your faults.
Recognise your real nature.
Reduce your wants.
Remain as a Sakshi.
Remember God always.
Serve, love and give.
Silence the thoughts.
Sing God's Names.
Still the bubbling mind.
Study scriptures.
Sublate the Upadhis.
Take refuge in God.
Thou art the Immortal Self.
Withdraw the Indriyas.

## CHAPTER IV

# PHILOSOPHY & VEDANTA

# Chapter IV—PHILOSOPHY & VEDANTA

## You are master of your destiny

Courage is thy birthright, but not fear; peace is thy divine heritage, but not restlessness. Immortality is thy birthright, but not mortality; strength, but not weakness; health, but not disease; bliss, but not sorrow; knowledge, but not ignorance.

Pain, sorrow and ignorance are illusory; these cannot live. Bliss, joy, and knowledge are true; these cannot die.

You are the architect of your own fate. You are the master of your own destiny. You can do and undo things. You sow an action and reap a tendency. You sow a tendency and reap a habit. You sow a habit and reap your character. You sow your character and reap your destiny. Therefore destiny is your own creation. You can undo it if you like—destiny is a bundle of habits.

Purushartha is self-exertion. Purushartha can give you anything. Change your habits. Change the mode of thinking: You can conquer destiny. You are now thinking. "I am the body." Start the spiritual anti-current and think: "I am immortal, diseaseless, sexless Atma." You can conquer death and attain the immortal seat of supreme splendour.

By virtuous deeds and right thoughts you can disarm destiny. You have a free-will to act. By self-exertion, Ratnakar became Valmiki. By self-exertion, Markandeya conquered death. By self-exertion alone did Uddalaka attain Nirvikalpa Samadhi (highest realisation). By self-exertion, Savitri brought back her husband (Satyavan) to life.

Therefore, apply yourself tenaciously, O Perm, to Atmic enquiry and meditation. Be vigilant and diligent. Kill the thoughts and desires. Overcome tomorrow's evil by today's self-exertion. Destroy unholy desires (Asubha Vasanas) through holy desires (Subha Vasanas). Slay unholy thoughts by holy thoughts, and gain victory over your destiny.

Do not yield to fatalism. Do not become impotent. Stand up like a lion. Exert and attain independence or Atma Swarajya. There is a magazine of power within you. There is a vast ocean of knowledge within you. All faculties are latent in you. Unfold them and become a Jivanmukta (liberated soul).

Positive overcomes the negative. This is the immutabe law of nature. Purushartha (self-exertion) is a mightier power. Purushartha is the lion or the elephant. Prarabdha (destiny) is the cat or the jackal. God helps those who help themselves. Vasishta asked Rama to do Purushartha. Fatalism will certainly induce inertia and laziness. Therefore gird up your lions and exert yourself to the utmost, O Prem.

May you all attain Self-realisation or Brahma Gyana in this very birth! May you all live immersed in the ocean of bliss in an illumined state! May you shine as liberated sages!

## Know thyself

That 'Being' who is described in the Upanishads is Brahman or Atman or the Absoulte. He is the fountain-head of all scriptural knowledge. He is the source or womb for everything. He is existence absolute, kowledge absolute and bliss absolute. He is indivisible, all-pervading, self-contained, eternal and immortal. He is beyond time, space and causation. He is beginningless and endless. He is the indweller of all beings. He is the witness of the activities of all the minds.

What on earth can cause fear in you when you have realised your identity with Brahman? What on earth can generate hatred, delusion, difference and sorrow in you when you behold the one in all, and all in one? What on earth can cause agitation in you when you have transcended the mind and when you rest peacefully in your own Sat Chit Ananda Swaroop—that magnanimous ocean of bliss and stupendous silence?

You experience disharmony and discord when Rajas (passion) and Tamas (inertia) prevail in the mind. Annihilate Tamas by increasing Rajas and destroy Rajas by increasing Sattva. There will be harmony and concord when Sattva prevails in the mind. Go beyond Sattva and hear the celestial music of the soul—music that you never heard before. It is the music of the meeting of the soul with Soul. It is the wonderful music that transcends all Ragas and Raginis. It is the unstruck music of the Infinite—that celestial melody which helps the aspirant to merge himself in Brahman. It is the music of Om or Pranava Dhwani. It is transcendental Anahata sound. It is the divine music of Krishna's flute. It is silence itself. Drown yourself in the bliss of the inner music of the soul. Its melody and sweetness are beyond description. You should experience it yourself.

You are the real master or governor of the universe. You are bound to none. Feel the majesty of yourself. Whatever your circumstances and environments may be, keep peaceful and happy. Abandon all anxiety, fear and worry. Rest in your centre. Be self-poised, self-pleased and self-contained. Sing Om. Chant Om. Meditate on Om. Realise the Self. Know the Self and be free. Now the whole world will be a heaven or a paradise for you. You are the Lord of lords, the God of all gods, the Emperor of emperors. You are in possession of the inexhaustible spiritual wealth. The sum total of the pleasures of the whole world is but a mere drop when compared to the bliss you enjoy now. You are the ocean of bliss now. What a magnanimous state! Even the thousand-tongued Adisesha can not describe it!

## Message of Amrita

Hey Amrita Putra!

Are you always peaceful? Are you noble? Do you possess self-restraint? Are you endowed with divine virtues? Are you free from ignorance? Do you possess knowledge of the Self? Have you got illumination? Have you realised the immortal, pure

Self? How do you stand before these questions? If you have not got these things, then come, sit down and listen! Here is the message of Amrita for you all! Even if you practise a particle of this, you will go beyond death, sorrow and pain.

Meditate always: "I am pure consciousness. I am Sat Chit Ananda Brahman. I am immutable, self-effulgent, immortal Self. I am the silent witness of the three states. *viz.*, waking state, dream state and deep sleep state. I am distinct from the body, mind, Prana and senses. I am distinct from the five sheaths." You will soon attain Self-realistion. You will attain knowledge of the Self (Brahma Gyana).

It is bondage when you are attached to your wife, son, property or body, when you take the body as the pure Self. It is liberation when you are not attached to any object of this world, when you identify yourself with the pure, immortal Atma.

Wherever there is Kama (desire), there is no Rama; wherever there is Rama there is no Kama. Wherever there is desire, there is the world. Therefore, go beyond desire by cultivating discrimination (Viveka) and dispassion (Vairagya) and by meditating on Brahman or the Supreme Self and be happy.

Live without the feeling of 'I-ness,' 'mine-ness' and attachment. Restrain the senses. Observe the rules of right conduct. Get purity of heart. Hear the Truth. Abide in the Self. Be happy.

As soon as you realise that you are not this body, you become free from sorrow and death. You are free from the bondage of Karma, from the fetters of desires, from the mirage of this mundane life and its concomitant evils and miseries.

'Soul' or 'Supreme Self' or 'Atma' or 'Brahman' is that abiding, constantly existing and imperishable entity which is the basis for the world, which is indivisible, self-luminous, unchanging and all-pervading, which is the silent witness or Sakshi of the three states, *viz.*, waking, dream and deep sleep. The knower of this soul or Atma attains immortality and enters the abode of bliss and nectar.

Brahman is real and eternal. This body is unreal and perishable. From the knowledge of Self (Atma) and not-self (Anatma) springs the stream of immortality or the ancient wisdom of the seers of the Upanishads.

Atma is the immortal substance or essence in man. Atma is the origin of thoughts, desires and reasonings. Atma is spiritual because it is beyond matter and mind. It must be immortal, because it is spiritual. It is beyond time, space and causation. It is beginningless, endless, causeless, and infinite.

If you realise this immortal soul which is hidden in your heart and all these forms, if the knots of Avidya (ignorance), Kama (desire) and Karma (action) are rent asunder, if the chain of ignorance, *viz.*, ignorance, non-discrimination, egoism, likes and dislikes, Karma, body, etc., is broken, you will be freed from the rounds of births and deaths and enter the city of deathlessness.

The ignorant man only runs after sensual objects and falls into the mortal coils spread around him. He lives in the midst of darkness. He falls again and again under the sway of the Lord of Death, (Yama). The way to Moksha is not apparent to him. He is deluded by the sensual pleasures of this world. But the patient, thoughtful man of discrimination and dispassion does not crave for the illusory pleasures of this world. He meditates on the supreme self and attains eternal bliss and immortality.

Moksha is the *summum bonum* of life. Moksha is the fulfilment of the life's purpose. Life ends in the earth plane when you attain Moksha, or liberation from births and deaths. The realisation of your real object in life is freedom or Moksha. Moksha bestows on you eternal life of undecaying bliss and perennial joy. Moksha is not annihilation. Moksha is the annihilation of this little, self-arrogating ego only. Moksha is realisation of the identity of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul. By annihilating this little self, you possess the whole of true universality. You attain life eternal—a fuller life.

If you have purity of mind and concentration, you can make the mind assume any Bhav you like. If you think of mercy, your whole being will be saturated with mercy. If you think of peace, the whole being will be filled with peace.

The spiritual path is doubtless beset with various difficulties. It is the razor path. The walk in this path is like walking on the edge of a sharp razor.

You will fall down several times, but you will have to rise up quickly and walk again with more zeal, boldness and cheerfulness. Every stumbling block will become a stepping stone to success or ascent in the hill of spiritual knowledge. Every fall will give you additional strength to rise up to a great height in the ladder of Yoga Do not lose sight of the goal. Do not miss the ideal. Do not be discouraged. You will soon get spiritual strength from within. The Indweller will guide you and push you up. All saints and sages, all prophets and seers had to pass through tremendous struggles and severe ordeals before they reached the goal. March boldly, O fair youth, and reach the goal.

It is not true that only one attained Moksha or liberation, and none else can History bears evidence of many a Sankara having come into this world. If the past could produce Sankaras, why not the future also ? What one has achieved, can be achieved by others also. This is the immutable law of nature Whosoever would attain the knowledge of the Self like Yagnavalkya of Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, like Uddalka of Chandogya Upanishad, will also attain Moksha or Immortality.

The way of the enlightened sages is sinless. The way to liberation or freedom or perfect happiness and peace is through perfect purity of mind and heart, of every act, of character and life, through self-restraint and control of mind, and through regular meditation on the pure self-luminous, indivisible, all-pervading Self or Atma.

If you attain Self-realisation, all doubts will be rent asunder. Supreme contentment will ever dwell in your heart. You will be purged of Rajas and Tamas. You will be ever peaceful and happy. Therefore struggle hard to attain this rare state of supreme blessedness in this very birth.

The flame of a lamp destroys immense darkness. Even so, knowledge of Self destroys ignorance or Avidya—the root cause of human sufferings and tribulations. Therefore, attain the knowledge of the Self, get illumination and go about happily.

What is that by knowing which everything else will be known ? What is that by attaining which there will be no hankering for any other thing ? What is that by realising which one becomes immortal fearless, desireless and rests in everlasting peace and happiness ? It is Brahman or Atma or the ultimate Truth which is the *summum bonum* of life. It is the Bhuma or intelligence or the unconditioned. You can get real happiness, only by attaining this Bhuma or the Highest Self.

May you all live in the spirit of this message of Amrita ! May you all be equipped with the four means of salvation through the grace of the Lord ! May you all rejoice in the self within. May you all attain Self-realisation in this very birth.

## Vedanta

The term Veda is derived from the Sanskrit root 'Vid'—to know. 'Anta' means end. Thus Vedanta literally signifies "end of wisdom". Philosophy is called Vedanta, because, it explains what that end is and how to achieve it. Vedanta is the religion of the Vedas or the Upanishads. It is the only universal, eternal religion. It is the essence of the teaching of the Srutis.

Vedanta is that bold philosophy which teaches unity of life or oneness of consciousness. It is that supreme philosophy which boldly proclaims, with emphasis and force, that this little Jiva or human being is identical with the Supreme Soul or the Eternal. It is that sublime philosophy which elevates the mind at once to the magnanimous heights of Brahmanhood, divine splendour and glory, which makes you absolutely fearless, which destroys all barriers that separate man from man, and which brings concord, unruffled peace and harmony to the suffering humanity at large. It is the only philosophy that can really unite on the basis of one common Self in all—a Hindu and a Mohammedan, a Catholic and a Protestant, a Vaishnavite and a Saivite, Irishman and an Englishman, a European and an American, on a common platform and in the core of their hearts also. It is the only philosophy that, when properly understood and practised, can put a definite stop to the world war, dissensions, splits, communal fights, skirmishes, etc., that exist in different nations and communities.

Vedanta is a magnetic healing balm for the wounded and afflicted in the dreadful battlefied of this dire Samsara. It is the divine collyrium which removes the cataract of ignorance and gives a new inner eye of intuition or wisdom. It is the direct royal road to the domain of unalloyed felicity and the Supreme Abode of Immortality and Eternal Bliss.

It eradicates ignorance—the root cause of human sufferings—puts an end to the ever revolving wheel of births and deaths and confers immortality, infinite knowledge and bliss. It gives hope to the hopeless, power to the powerless, vigour to the vigourless and joy to the joyless.

Vedanta speaks of one Atman or Brahman which is beginningless, endless, timeless, spaceless, immortal, self-luminous, indivisible and all-pervading, who is Sat Chit Ananda.

Vedanta gives freedom for all. It embraces or includes one and all. Vedanta is neither theory nor dry philosophy for contention and argumentation. It is actual life of perennial bliss in Brahman or Truth. Equip yourself with four means. Enquire, "Who am I ?" Meditate on Brahman. Know "Thou art That." O aspirants bold ! Say "Om Tat Sat Om—Sat Chit Ananda rupa Sivoham, Sivoham : Sat Chit Ananda Swaroopoham."

## Message of Gita

This Atma is not born nor does He ever die. He is unborn, eternal, changeless, ancient and inexhaustible. He is not killed when the body is killed. He slays not, nor is he slain.

A Sthithaprajna or Jivan Mukta is free from desires, longings, fears, 'mine-ness,' 'I-ness' and attachment. He is satisfied in his one self. He is indifferent amidst sensual pleasures. He is not elated by getting desirable objects. He has a poised mind at all times and under all conditions. He is centred in his own self.

Work incessantly without egoism and without expectation of fruits. Have a balanced mind in success and failure. You will not be bound by Karmas or actions.

The senses move among sense-objects. Seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, going, sleeping, breathing, speaking, sneezing, opening and closing the eyes, are the functions or Dharmas of the organs only. In reality, thou art the silent witness of the activities of the senses and the modifications of the mind. Prakriti or Swabhava does everything. Atman is actionless (Nishkriya). In essence, thou art the Atman.

With the mind harmonised in Yoga, he who sees the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self sees the same everywhere.

He who hates no creature, who is friendly and compassionate to all, who is free from attachment and egoism, balanced in pleasure and pain, forgiving, ever content, steady in meditation, selfcontrolled, possessed of firm conviction with mind and intellect dedicated to the Lord, who neither rejoices nor hates, neither grieves nor desires, who is full of devotion, who is the same to a foe and a friend in honour and dishonour, who is the same in cold and heat, in pleasure and pain, who is balanced in censure and praise, is a great devote or Gunatita. He is very dear to the Lord.

Doubtless the mind is fleeting like the air, impetuous and restless. It is hard to be controlled. But by practice (Abhyasa) and dispassion (Vairagya), it can be controlled.

Fix your mind on the Lord. Become His devotee. Sacrifice everything unto the Lord. Bow down to Him. Surely you will attain Him. Abandon the fruits of all works Take refuge in the Lord alone He will liberate you from all sins.

Wherever is Krishna – the Lord of Yoga – wherever is Partha – the archer – there is prosperity, victory, happiness and sound policy.

## Essence of Yoga Vasishta

If the four sentinels that wait at the gates of Moksha (salvation), *viz.*, Shanti (peace). Vichara (Atmic enquiry), Santosh (contenment) and Sat Sanga (association with wise), be befriended, then, there will be no obstacle in the attainment of the final emancipation. Even if one of them be befriended, then he will introduce you to the rest of his companions.

If you attain knowledge of the Self or Brahma Gyana, you will be freed from the trammels of births and deaths. All doubts will vanish; all Karmas will perish. It is through one's own efforts; alone that the immortal, all-blissful Brahmic seat can be attained.

The slayer of Atma is the mind only. The form of the mind is Sankalpas. The true nature of the mind consists in the Vasanas. The actions of the mind alone are truly termed Karmas or actions. The universe is nothing but the mind, manifesting as such only through the potency of Brahman. The mind contemplating on the body becomes the body itself and then enmeshed in it, is afflicted by it.

The mind manifests itself as the external world in the shape of pains or pleasures. The mind subjectively is consciousness ; objectively it is this universe. The mind attains, through its enemy of discrimination, the quiescent state of Para Brahman. The real bliss is that one which, arises when the mind, divested of all desires through the eternal Gyana, destroys its subtle form. The Sankalpas and Vasanas (subtle desires), which you generate, enmesh you as in a net. The self-light of Para Brahman alone is appearing as the mind or this universe.

Persons without Atmic enquiry, will see as real this world which is nothing but of the nature of Sankalpa. The expansion of this mind alone is Sankalpa. Sankalpa, through its power of differentiation, generates this universe. Extinction of Sankalpas alone is Moksha.

The enemy of Atma is this impure mind only which is filled with excessive delusion and hosts of worldly thoughts. There is no other vessel on this earth to wade through the ocean of re-birth than the mastery of the antagonistic mind.

The original sprout of the painful Ahamkara (egoism) with its tender stem of re-births at length ramifies itself everywhere with its long branches of 'mine' and 'thine' and yields its unripe fruits of death, disease, old age, pains and sorrows. This tree can be destroyed to its root by the fire of Gyana only.

All the heterogeneous visibles perceived through the organs of sense are only unreal but that which is real is Para Brahman or the Supreme Soul.

If all objects which have an enchanting appearance become eye-sores and present the very reverse of the former feelings, then the mind is destroyed. All your properties are useless. All wealth land you in dangers. Desirelesness will take you to the eternal blissful abode.

Destroy Vasanas and Sankalpas. Kill egoism. Annihilate this mind. Equip yourself with the four means. Meditate on the pure, immortal, all-pervading Self or Atma. Get knowledge of the Self and attain immortality, everlasting peace, eternal bliss, freedom and perfection.

## Message of Wisdom

The desire to know the Brahman springs only in the person whose mind is pure, who is free from desires and who, free from the deeds done in this birth and in the previous ones, becomes disgusted with the external, ephemeral perishable objects.

Even when Brahman is explained, those who have not been purged of their faults and impurities, either disbelieve or misbelieve it, as was the case with Indra; Virochana, etc. Therefore knowledge as inculcated arises only in him who has, by Tapas, etc., performed either in this birth or in many previous births purified himself. The Sruti says: "To that high-souled man whose devotion to the Lord is great and whose devotion to his preceptor is as great as that to the Lord, these secrets explained become illuminated."

Just as the coloured water penetrates freely and nicely a piece of cloth when it is pure white, so also, the instructions of a sage can penetrate and settle down in the hearts of aspirants only when their minds are calm, when there are no desires for enjoyments and when the impurities of their minds are destroyed.

> "But I assure you, on the authority of my own intuitional knowledge as well as that of other illumined souls, that, the Reality can be realised by man. But one who has known cannot communicate it to others for want of means."
>
> —*Sage Vasishta.*

Even the knowledge aqcuired by the five senses which are common to all cannot be communicated to others. You cannot tell the taste of butter to a man who has never tasted it or even communicate the idea of colour to one born blind.

All that a teacher can do is to tell his disciple the method of knowing the Truth or the path that leads to the disclosure of intuitional faculty.

Hold the magnificent torch of faith. Float high the unique banner of peace. Wear the magnanimous shield of dispassion. Put on the marvellous coat-of-arms of discrimination. Sing the immortal song of 'Soham'. March boldly with the banner of Pranava—Om Om Om. Blow the wonderful conch of courage. Kill the enemies--doubt, ignorance, passion and egoism—and enter the illimitable kingdom of Atma. Possess the imperishable wealth of Atma. Taste the divine immortal essence. Drink the nectar of Immortality.

## Message of Peace

The kingdom of peace is beyond all speech and thought. Peace is not merely the absence of noise, tumult, strife or quarrels, controversies or disputes. It is not a condition or environment from which all undesirable elements are removed. This peace is not an inert passive state. It is not a hypnotic trance. It is not a negative physical condition. It is a positive state of spiritual attainment. It is your centre, ideal and goal. It is perfect awareness. It is a magnanimous, indescribable state in which the pure soul enjoys the highest divine bliss and transcendental divine knowledge. You will become absolutely fearless and desireless by drinking this divine nectar of peace. You will be in communion with the Supreme Soul or Atman by attaining this peace. In this state of peace there are no yesterdays or to-morrows, no sunset or daybreak—there is eternal sunshine. It can hardly be acquired from external sources. It can be reached only by patient spiritual practices.

You may be in quite adverse circumstances. You may remain in the midst of calamities, troubles, tribulations, difficulties and sorrows, and yet, you may enjoy the inward harmony and peace if you rest in God by withdrawing the senses, by stilling the mind and eradicating its inpurities. Lord Jesus was persecuted in a variety of ways. He was put to death on the cross and yet what did he say? He said, "O Lord, forgive them! They know not what they are doing." How peaceful He was even when His life was at stake. He was enjoying the inner peace.

The goal of life is attainment of self-realisation or God-consciousness. There is one supreme, undying, intelligent, principle or essence or Atma or the Supreme Self who dwells in the chambers of your heart. He exists in the past, present and future. He is Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute and Bliss Absolute. Ignorant man vainly searches for his happiness in perishable external objects that are conditioned in time, space and causation. He has no peace of mind. His desires are not gratified. He amasses wealth, begets children, gets titles, honours, name and fame and yet his mind is restless. He has no abiding joy and lasting happiness. He is still in want of something. He has no feeling of fullness. This feeling of fullness and eternal satisfaction can only be obtained by realising one's own Self through self-restraint, purity and meditation.

How long do you want to lead a life of duality, restlessness, discontentment, and dissatisfaction? How long do you wish to lead a life of ignorance, bitterness, hatred and separation? How long do you wish to continue your selfish struggles? How long do you wish to behold differnces and distinctions? How long do you wish to keep the barrier between man and man?

You cry for peace or Shanti. But where to get it and through whom? You can realise peace in your own heart through association with the sages and by meditation. You can find this peace only in stillness. Peace can be found only within. You certainly cannot find it in extenal objects. Look within. Sit silently in a quiet room for one or two hours. Close your eyes. Concentrate on a point between the two eye-brows. Withdraw the senses and the mind from the external objects. Be still. Silence the surging emotions and bubbling thoughts. Forget the body and the world. Enter into the great calm. Get deep down into the innermost recesses of your heart. Plunge in the ocean of peace. Realise your oneness with the one Supreme Self that dwells in the chambers of your heart. Have daily four sittings in winter and two in summer. Be regular in your practice. Regularity is of paramount importance.

It is useless to talk of the cessation of war while you are all full of petty jealousy and private hatred. Remove your discordant inharmonious vibrations first. There will be no more war between nations. Individuals only go to constitute a nation. Lead an ideal life of peace. Kill ruthlessly suspicion, prejudice of all sorts, envy, selfishness, greed for power and possessions. Lead a simple life. Practise daily meditation and establish peace in your own heart. Then radiate it to your neighbours and all who come in contact with you. Disseminate it far and wide.

Mysterious is this peace. If you yourself enjoy this peace, you can contribute peace to the world. Realise this Peace that passeth all understanding and be free. May this Peace guide you all. May this Peace be your centre, ideal and goal !

## Philosophy and meditation on 'Om'

Brahman or the Supreme Being is the highest of all. Om is His name. So, Om is to be adored. Om is everything. Om is the symbol of Brahman. It is the word of power. It is the sacred monosyllable. It is the essence of the Vedas. It is the boat to take you to the other shore of fearlessness and immortality.

Pranava or Om is the greatest of all Mantras. It bestows liberation directly. All Mantras begin with Om. Every hymn begins with Om. Every Upanishad begins with Om. Gayatri begins with Om. The oblations that are offered to the various gods are preceded by the chanting of Om. The greatness of Om cannot be adequately described by anybody.

That place where all speech stops all thoughts cease; where the function of the intellect and all organs stop, is Om. The goal or word which all Vedas praise, which all scriptures proclaim and wishing for which the aspirants lead the life of Brahmacharya is Om. Om is verily the highest. It is the best support. It is the highest Truth. He who knows Om is worshipped in the world of Brahman. He obtains verily whatever he desires.

Om is formed by adding the letters A, U, and M. 'A' represents the beginning of the range of sound. 'U' represents the middle. 'M' represents the end. Thus Om covers the whole range of sound and words.

All triplets, such as, Brahma, Vishnu, Siva ; Virat, Hiranyagarbha, Ishwara ; Sattva, Rajas, Tamas ; waking state, dream state, deep sleep state ; creations, preservation, and destruction etc., are represented by Om.

Chanting of Om, Japa or silent repetition of Om, singing of Om, meditation of Om, purify the mind, remove the tossing of the mind, destroy the veil of ignorance and help the aspirant to merge in Brahman or the Supreme Self.

Om is the bow, mind is the arrow, Brahman or the Supreme Self is its aim. Hit at Brahman with a pure and one-pointed mind. Just as the arrow becomes one with the target, you will become one with Brahman.

Know this one syllable only. You will know everything. You will attain highest knowledge.

Sit in Padma, Siddha or any comfortable pose. Concentrate on the spot midway between the two eyebrows (Trikute). Meditate on the significance of the following formulae with Bhav or feeling. Repeat them mentally also.

*Sat Chit Ananda Swaroopoham*

| | |
|---|---|
| I am Sat Chit Ananda Swaroop | Om Om Om |
| *Aham Brahmasmi*—I am Brahman | Om Om Om |
| I am All-pervading consciousness | Om Om Om |

| | |
|---|---|
| I am Sakshi (silent witness) | Om Om Om |
| Soham, Sivoham, I am He, I am Siva | Om Om Om |
| I am distinct from body and mind | Om Om Om |
| I am Immortal, All-pervading Soul | Om Om Om |

You will soon realise your identity with the Supreme Self and shine in your pristine Brahmic glory.

### Jivanmukta

A Jivanmukta or liberated sage is absolutely free from desires, fear, selfishness, egoism, mineness, attachment, greed and hatred. He is full of pure love, compassion and mercy.

He has mastery over the mind and senses. He does not identify himself with the body. He always dwells in his own Inner Self. He is ever contented and happy.

He does not offend anybody in thought, word and deed. He is not hurt even a bit by taunts censures, insults and persecutions. He keeps equanimity of mind in censure and praise, honour and dishonour, pleasure and pain.

He lives in the world but he is not of the world. He has no idea of enjoyment or enjoyer. This state is indescribable. He is Brahman himself.

He is a power house of spiritual energy. Sit before him. Your doubts will be cleared by themselves. You will feel a peculiar thrill of joy and peace in his presence. He may not speak and yet may teach the aspirants through the language of silence.

He sleeps wherever he likes and eats anything from anybody's hands. He is above injunctions and prohibitions but he will not violate the rules of the scriptures. He is above good and evil, virtue and vice. He finds no fault with others. He never becomes angry even under extreme provocations. He is ever gentle and mild. He always speaks sweetly. He never utters harsh words. He has no dislike or hatred for any creature in this world in thought, word, and deed. He blesses those who persecute him.

He speaks a few words but these words produce a tremendous impression on the minds of the hearers. They give a new life and joy to all who hear his message.

The liberated sage (the prince of ascetics) has conquered the enemy of ignorance. He has known the secret of true bliss. He has reached the imperishable seat of Brahman. He always rests in his own Sat Chit Ananda Swaroopa.

He has realised that he is distinct from the three bodies and five sheaths and that he is the witness of the three states. He is free from the distinctions of I, he and you.

A Jivanmukta inspired with the divine spirit, intoxicated with the immortal nectar, filled with the infinite Atma, endowed with an equal vision and balanced mind, beholds only the Self or Atma everywhere and embraces all with pure love. Glory to such awakened inspired high souls! May their blessings be upon you for ever !!

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## CHAPTER V

# DIALOGUES FROM SCRIPTURES

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## Rama—Vas'shta Samvad

(*Yoga Vasishta*)

Sri Rama asked: "Venerable Guru! What is attraction? What is non-attraction? What is that attraction which leads one to bondage? What is that non-attraction which tends to freedom? How can I destroy this bondage? Please enlighten me on the above points."

Vasishta replied: "If any one believes that this body is permanent, if he fails to discriminate between the body and its presider or indweller or inner ruler who is eternal and if he thinks always of body only, he is a slave to attraction and he is bound by attraction. This is attraction. This will undoubtedly lead to bondage. The belief that everything is Brahman or Atma only, and that there is nothing for one to love or hate in this universe is non-attraction. This non-attraction will lead to Moksha or final emancipation.

Jivanmuktas are endowed with non-attraction. When there is non-attraction, the mind abandons the pleasures of the world, egoism vanishes and attachment for anything perishes. The state of non-attraction leads to Moksha. Those who have attained the state of non-attraction relinquish the fruits of actions. They seek neither action nor inaction. Attraction entails one in rebirths.

This attraction is of two kinds, *viz*., Bandhya (binding) and Abandhya (non-binding). The former belongs to the ignorant, while the latter is the ornament of those who have attained self-realisation. The former produces rebirths through attachment to objects, while the latter generates discrimination and knowledge of the Self. Lord Vishnu and the hosts of Siddhas protect this earth by performing various actions through the Abandhya attraction.

A Jivanmukta is not attached to actions though he performs manifold actions for the well-being of the world. He is quite indifferent though he associates himself with objects. He has no attraction for the objects. His mind is ever fixed in the Supreme Self only. He regards this world as an unreality. He does neither live in future expectation not does he rely on his present possession. He does not live on the pleasure of his past memory. Sleeping, he is awake in his vision of supreme light: and waking, he is plunged in the deep sleepless sleep of Nirvikalpa Samadhi. He does actions and remains as if he has done nothing. He does all actions without the error of believing himself as the actor. He neither rejoices nor grieves at anything. He behaves himself as a boy with boys and as a veteran with old people. He is youthful in the society of young men and is grave in the company of the wise. He rejoices at the happiness of others. He is sympathetic with the people who are in distress. O Ram! Conduct yourself in such a manner when you rule your kingdom. You will never lose sight of the Reality."

## Deva—Yaksha Samvad

(*Kena Upanishad*)

In the fight with the Asuras, the Devas were victorious. The Devas thought that they did so with their own power and prowess and forgot that it was divine help which brought victory to them. Lord Brahma wanted to teach them a lesson. He knew their idea of being puffed up with vanity and appeared before them in the form of a Yaksha (Great Spirit)—the beginning and end of which were not visible. They did not know Him. They spoke to Agni thus : "O Jataveda ! Find out what this great spirit is." He said : "Yes." Agni ran up to Brahma and Brahma said : "Who art thou" ? He replied : "I am verly Agni, I am verily Jataveda." Brahma asked Agni : "What power hast thou ?" Agni replied : "I can even burn whatsoever there is on earth." Brahma placed a blade of grass before Agni and said : "Burn this'. Agni approached it with all his power. He could not burn it. Next came Vayu (the god of wind). Brahma asked Vayu : "What power hast thou ?" Vayu replied : "I can blow away all the universe and all that is on the earth." Brahma placed a blade of grass before Vayu and said : "Blow this away". Vayu approached it with all his power and was not able to make it move an inch from its place. Last of all the chief of the Devas, Indra himself, came. But when he reached the spot he found that the Yaksha had vanished. Indra was in a state of great dilemma. He was confused and perplexed. When he was thus standing there, bewildered and ashamed at their defeat, Uma (Haimavati)—the daughter of Himavat (Himalayas) and the consort of

Lord Siva—appered before him and revealed to him the real identity of the Yaksha. Then only Indra knew the 'spirit' to be Brahman. He verily became excellent before the other gods on account of the grace of the Mother Uma.

On account of egoism, you think that you do everything and so you are bound. Feel that you are and instrument in the hands of God. God works through your hands, beholds through your eyes, hears through your ears, smells through your nose. You will be freed from egoism and the bondage of Karma. You will attain peace and become one with God. This is the secret of Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga.

## Yagnavalkya—Maitreyi Samvad

Yagnavalkya, the greatest seer and sage, said: "Maitreyi, verily, I am going away from this house into the forest to enter another order of life (Sannyasa) ; therefore. let me devide my property between you and Katyayani."

Maitreyi said : "My venerable lord, if this whole world with all its wealth belongs to me, tell me truly, could I attain immortality."

"No," replied Yagnavalkya, "Like the life of rich people will be your life ; but there is no hope of obtaining immortality by wealth."

Maitreyi said : "Of what use would be wealth to me, if I do not become thereby immortal ? Tell me, O venerable lord, any means of attaining inmortality of which thou knowest"

Yagnavalkya replied : "Come, sit down, my beloved Maitreyi, I will explain it thee ; try to understand well what I say."

Yagnavalka said : "Verily, not indeed for the husband's sake the husband is dear, but for the sake of the Self the husband is dear. Verily not indeed for the wife's sake the wife is dear, but for the sake of the Self the wife is dear. Verily, not indeed for the sake of the son the son is dear, but for the sake of the Self the son is dear. Verily, this immortal, all-pervading Atma or Brahman is to be seen, heard, reflected and meditated upon, O Maitreyi ; *Atma Va are Drashtavyo Srotavyo Mantavyo Niddhidhyasithavyo.*"

"O Maitreyi ! When there is duality, one sees the other, one smells the other, one tastes the other, one salutes the other, one speaks to the other, one touches the other, one knows the other ; but when the Self or Atma only is all this how could one see the other, how could he smell the other, touch the other, know the other ? How could he know Him by whom he knows all this ? That Self is to be described by "No, no" (*Neti. Neti*). Atma or the Supreme Self is imperishable. He is free and unattached. He is not subject to pain or destruction. How could one know the knower? Thus, O beloved Maitreyi, thou hast been instructed."

Having said this, Yagnavalkya went to the forest.

### Nachiketas—Yama Samvad

(*Katha Upanishad*)

Om Om Om :

Nachiketas said : "That which thou seest as other than virtue and vice, other than cause and effect, other than the past and future, tell me that, O Lord Yama. This is my third boon from thee."

Yama replied: "The goal which all the Vedas speak of, which all penances proclaim and wishing for which the aspirants lead the life of a Brahmacharin or celibate, that goal I will briefly tell thee. It is Om.

This word is verily Brahman; this word is verily the highest; he who knows this word, obtains, verily whatever he wishes—he attains Immortality and Eternal Bliss.

This Atman is beginningless, endless, birthless, deathless, changeless, formless, attributeless and colourless. He is without sound, touch, smell and taste. He is eternal, immortal, all-pervading, self-luminous, indivisible, one without a second. He is beyond Avyaktam or the unmanifested. He dwells in the intellect or the cave of the heart. He is the inner Self of all beings.

He who is free from desire, whose mind is concentrated and peaceful, whose senses are subdued, beholds this mysterious Atman through meditation and intuition in his own intellect and enjoys immortality and everlasting peace and bliss.

This Atman is hidden in all beings. It is realised by subtle seers through their sharp and subtle intellect, with eyes and other senses turned from sensual objects.

When all desires are destroyed, when the three knots of the heart, *i.e.*, Avidya (ignorance), Kama (desire), Karma (works) are rent asunder, when the five organs of knowledge are at rest together with the mind and when the intellect ceases functioning or becomes calm, you will attain immortality or Paramam Gati or the highest state.

Just as you draw the pith or stalk from a reed, so also, you will have to draw or take out this essence of Atma from the body or the five sheaths patiently and boldly through meditation, Vichara or enquiry and Viveka (discrimination.)'

Nachiketas got clear instructions or Brahma Vidya from Lord Yama through the third boon granted by Yama, practised meditation and attained Brahman, *i.e.,* became immortal through knowledge of the Self. Any qualified student like Nachiketas who knows the Atman can surely attain immortality.

*'Om Sahanavavatu Sahanaubhunaktu*
*Sahaveeryam Karavavahai, Tejaswinavadeeta-*
*matsu*
*Maa vidwishavahai."*
*Om Shanti* ! *Shanti* !! *Shanti* !!!

'Om! May He protect us both (teacher and pupil). May He cause us both to enjoy the bliss of Mukti. May we both exert together to find out the true meaning of the scriptures. May our studies be fruitful. May we never quarrel with each other."

Om Peace ! Peace ! Peace !!

## Kausalya—Pippalada Samvad

(*Prasna Upanishad*)

Kausalya, son of Aswala, questioned Pippalada : "O Bhagavan Pippalada ! Whence is this Prana born ?

How does it come into this body? How does it abide after it has divided itself? How does it go out? How does it support what is without? How does it support all within the body?"

He replied: "You ask questions about transcendental matters. I will explain to thee because you are a great enquirer of Brahman.

This Prana is born of the Atman. As this shadow is the man, so is this Prana in the Atman. By the action of the mind this enters into this body.

As a king commands his officers, saying to them: 'Govern these or those villages', so does this Prana disposes the other Pranas, each for their separate allotted work.

The Apana dwells in the organs of excretion and generation; the Prana itself abides in the eye, ear, mouth and nose. In the middle is Samana. It distributes the food supplied equally and the seven flames proceed from it.

This Atman is in the heart. Here there are a hundred and one nerves (arteries). Each of them has a hundread branches; again every one of these has seventy-two thousand sub-branches. In these the Vyana moves.

Again, through one other, the Udana ascending, leads us upwards to the virtuous world by good work; to sinful worlds by sin; and to the world of men by virtue and sin combined.

The sun, verily is the external Prana. He rises and assists the Prana in the eye. The goddess of the earth attracts Apana downwards. The other (between the sun and the earth) is Samana. The wind is Vyana.

The external fire indeed is Udana. Therefore, he whose fire has gone out, enters another body with his senses absorbed in the mind.

Whatever his thought (at the time of death), with that he attains Prana; and the Prana united with Udana together with the Jivatama, leads on to the world thought of.

The learned man who knows Prana thus his offspring (does not perish and he becomes immortal);

He who knows the origin, the entry, the seat, the five-fold distribution of Prana and its internal state in the body, obtains immortality, yea, obtains immortality."

## Uddalaka—Swetaketu Samvad

### (*Chandogya Upanishad*)

Uddalaka said: Swetaketu! Have you ever asked your teacher for that instruction by which we hear what cannot be heard, by which we perceive what cannot be perceived, by which we know what cannot be known."

Swetaketu said: "What is that instruction, Sir?"

The father replied. "My dear, just as by single lump of clay, all that is made of clay is known, all modifications being only a name based upon words, (the difference being only a name arising from speech) but the truth being that all is clay—thus, my dear, is that instruction."

"Please, Sir, explain to me further" said Swetaketu.

Uddalaka : "Bring me a fruit of that Nyagrodha tree (Banyan tree.)"

Swetaketu : "Here is one, Sir,"

Uddalaka : "Break it."

Swetaketu : "It is broken, Sir."

Uddalaka : "What do you see there ?"

Swetaketu : "Those extremely small seeds, Sir."

Uddalaka : "Break one of them, my dear."

Swetaketu : "It is broken, Sir."

Uddalaka : "What do you see there ?"

Swetaketu : "Nothing, Sir."

The father said ; "My son, that subtle essence which you do not perceive there, of that very essence this great Nyagrodha tree grows (exists). Believe me, my son."

"Now, that which is the subtle essence (the root of all) in that all that exists has its Self ; That is the Self ; That is the Truth ; That thou art, O Swetaketu."

"Please, Sir, explain to me further," said the son.

"Be it so, my child", replied the father.

Uddalaka : "Place this salt in the water and come to me in the morning."

Swetaketu, the son, did as he was commanded. The father said to him : "Bring the salt, my dear, which you put in the water last night."

The son looked for it and did not find it, for it had become dissolved

The father said : "My child, taste it from the surface of the water. How is it ?"

The son replied : "It is salt."

Uddalaka : "Taste it from the middle. How is it"?

The son replied : "It is salt."
Uddalaka : "Taste it from the bottom. How is it" ?
The son replied : "It is salt."
The father said : "Throw it away and come to me.
The son did so ; 'It exists for ever.'

Then the father said to him : "Here also in this body, forsooth, you do not perceive the Truth (Sat or Pure Being), my son, but there it is indeed."

The father said : "Now that which is the subtle essence (the root of all), in That all that exists has its Self : That is the Self ; That is the Truth ; That thou art ; O Swetaketu."

## Yagnavalkya—Gurgi Samvad

(*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*)

Gargi, daughter of Vachuknu said ; "I shall ask thee two questions. Will you answer me, O venerable sage ?"

Yagnavalkya said : "Ask, O Gargi."

Gargi said : "O Yagnavalkya, that of which they say that it is above the heavens, beneath the earth, embracing heaven and earth, past, present and future, tell me in what is it woven, like warp and woof."

Yagnavalkya replied : "In ether or Akasa."

Gargi said : "I bow to thee, O Yagnavalkya. Be prepared for the second question."

Yagnavalkya said : "Ask, O Gargi."

Gargi said : "In what is the ether woven and rewoven like warp and woof ?"

Yagnavalkya replied : "O Gagri, in Brahman is the ether woven and rewoven like warp and woof. Sages call this the Akshara (the imperishable). It is neither coarse, nor subtle, neither short nor long, neither red nor white. It is neither shadow nor darkness. It is without ears, eyes, or mind or breath, without speech, without smell, without mouth. It has no within and no without".

"By the command of this Indestructible Being, O Gargi, sun and moon, heaven and earth, stand upheld in their places. By the command of this Akshara, O Gargi, minutes, hours, days, nights, weeks, months, seasons and years stand aprt."

"Whosoever, O Gargi. without knowing the Akshara, departs from this world, becomes a miser. But he, O Gargi, who departs from this world, knowing this Indestructible Being, is a true Brahman or liberated sage."

"That Brahman, O Gargi, although unseen, but He sees; although unheard, but He hears; although unthought, but He thinks; although unknown, but He knows. There is none that sees but He, there is none that hears but He, there is none that thinks but He, there is none that knows but He. In that Akshara, then, O Gagri, the ether is woven and rewoven like warp and woof."

On hearing these words of wisdom from the mouth of Yagnavalkya, Gargi became silent.

## Prajapathi—Indra Samvad

(*Chandogya Upanishad*)

Prajapathi said: "One must search out and must try to understand the Self or Atman which is free from sin, old age, death, grief, hunger and thirst, with true desires (Sat-Kama), and true will (Sat-Sankalpa). Then only he will obtain eternal bliss and immortality."

Indra said: "O Venerable Lord. I want to know the Atman. Please instruct me."

Prajapathi said: "Adorn yourself will; dress yourself well; clean yourself well and then look at yourself in the basin of water".

Indra did so.

Prajapathi said: O Indra! What do you see?

He replied: "I behold myself in the basin of water well-adorned, well dressed and clean."

Prajapathi said: "That is the Self, the Immortal, the Fearless – that is Brahman."

Indra was not satisfied with this instruction. He reflected within himself. "The Atman also will be blind, if the body is blind; lame, if the body is lame; one-eyed if the body is one-eyed; crippled, if the body is crippled; and will perish if the body perishes. Therefore I see no good in this doctrine."

He again went to Prajapathi.

Prajapathi said: "The Self that dreams is the Immortal, Fearless, Brahman."

Indra was not satisfied with this doctrine also. He reflected: "Though the dream self is not blind when the body is blind, not one-eyed when the body is one-eyed, is not destroyed when the body is destroyed; yet it becomes conscious of pain and sheds tears even in dream. Therefore I see no good in this."

Indra again went to Prajapathi.

Prajapathi said: "The Self that enjoys deep sleep is the immortal, Fearless, Brahman."

Indra reflected : "In deep sleep there is utter annihilation. I do not get any intuitional knowledge, I see no good in this doctrine also."

Indra again went to Prajapathi.

Prajapathi said : "O Indra, this body is mortal. The embodied self is subject to pleasure and pain. The eye is the instrument of seeing. The nose is the instrument of smelling. The ear is the instrument of hearing. But the Atman and Brahman is the silent witness (Sakshi). He is immortal, Fearless. He is distinct from the three bodies, the three Avasthas or states of consciousness—the mind, body and senses."

Indra meditated on Brahman and attained Eternal Bliss and Immortality through Brahma Gyana or knowledge of the Brahman.

## CHAPTER VI

# SELF-REALISATION

# Chapter VI—SELF-REALISATION

Behind this world show, behind these physical phenomena, behind these names and forms, behind the feelings, thoughts, emotions and sentiments there dwells the silent witness, thy immortal friend and real well-wisher—the Purusha or world teacher, the unseen governor or master, the unknown Yogi, the invisible power of consciousness or hidden sage. That is the only permanent reality and living truth. That is Brahman or the Supreme Being or the Absolute. That is Atma. That is Self. The goal of human life is to realise the reality behind the changing phenomena. The *summum bonum* of human aspiration is to attain Self-realisation. Self-realisation alone can make you absolutely free and independent. Trust not your body, mind and the senses. Have inner spiritual life. Attain knowledge of the Self through steady devotion and discipline. Drink the nectar of immortality, quench the flames of Samsar and allay its tortures, miseries and sorrows.

Friends! Is there not a higher mission in life besides eating, sleeping and talking? Is there not any higher form of eternal bliss than these transitory and illusory pleasures? Is there not a dignified life than the sensual life? How uncertain is life here! How insecure is our existence in this earth-plane with various kinds of fear! How painful is this mundane life? Should we not attempt diligently now to reach a place—the immortal abode, our original sweet home of pristine, purity and divine splendour—where there is eternal sunshine, absolute security, perfect peace and where there is neither disease, nor death, nor war.

Come, come! Become a Yogi. Come out of your narrow holes or ruts. Crush all sorts of superstitions. Aim high. To become an advocate, or a doctor, or an engineer, or a professor, is the hight of your ambition. Can this give you freedom? Can this give you eternal bliss? Can this give you everlasting peace? Can this make you immortal? Do you not like to attain perfection or immortality? Do you not wish to achieve the *summum bonum* of existance—Kaivalya or independence—Atma Swarajya? Then come, struggle for higher things. Be bold! Look not back! March forward! Enquire: Who am I? Hear, reflect, meditate and realise the Atmic splendour!

Om is Sat Chit Ananda. Om is Infinity. Om is Eternity. Om is Immortality. Sing Om. Chant Om. Feel Om.

Shanti! Shanti!! Shanti!!!
Peace! Peace!! Peace!!!

## CHAPTER VII

# MESSAGES

# Chapter VII—MESSAGES

## New Year message

By the command of the Indestructible Being, minutes, hours, days and nights, stand apart. By the command of the Immortal Brahman, months, years, seasons and solstices, stand apart. He who knows this Indestructible Being is a liberated sage or jivanmukta.

Time rolls on. New becomes old and old becomes new again. To-day is the most auspicious New Year's day God has given you another chance this year to enable you to strive for your salvation. To-day man is. To-morrow he is not. Therefore avail yourself of this golden opportunity, struggle hard and reach the goal of life. Make the best use of every moment of this New Year. Unfold all latent faculties. Here is a chance to begin life anew, to grow and evolve and become a super-human or a great dynamic Yogi.

On this glorious New Year's day make strong resolves to wipe away all the old worldly Vasanas or tendencies and bad impressions and to control the senses and the mind.

Know the value of time. Time is most precious. Utilise every second profitably. Live every moment of your life for the realisation of your ideal and goal. Do not procrastinate. That "to-morrow" will never come. Now or never. Abandon idle gossiping. Kill egoism, laziness and inertia. Forget the past. A glorious and brilliant future is awaiting you.

Equal vision is the touchstone of knowledge. Unselfishness is the touchstone of virtue. Brahmacharya is the touchstone of ethics. Oneness is the touchstone of Self-realisation. Humility is the touchstone of devotion. Therefore be unselfish, humble and pure. Develop equal vision. Be in tune with the Infinite.

Satyam (truth) is the seed. Ahimsa is the root. Meditation is the shower. Shanti (peace) is the flower. Moksha (salvation) is the fruit. Therefore, speak the truth, practise Ahimsa and meditation, Cultivate Shanti. You will attain the final emancipation or freedom from the trammels of births and deaths, and enjoy Eternal Bliss.

Be thou a spiritual warrior of Truth. Put on the armour of discrimination. Wear the shield of dispassion. Hold the flag of Dharma. Sing the song of Soham or Sivoham. March boldly with the band of Pranava—Om Om Om. Blow the conch of courage. Kill the enemies of doubt, ignorance, passion and egoism and enter the illimitable kingdom of blissful Brahman. Possess the imperishable wealth of Atma. Taste the divine immortal essence. Drink the nectar of Immortality.

May this bright New Year's day and all the succeeding days of this year and all the future years also bring you all success, peace, prosperity and happiness. May you all tread the path of truth and righteousness ! May you enjoy the eternal bliss of the Absolute, leading a divine life, singing Lord's name, sharing what you have with others, serving the poor and the sick with Atma Bhav and melting the mind in silent meditation in the Supreme Self!

## Guru Poorima message

*Om Sad Guru Paramatmane Namah!*
"*Gurur Brahma, Gurur Vishnu, Gurur Devo*
*Maheswarah:*
*Guru Sakshat Param Brahma Tasmai Sree*
*Guravenamah.*"

Guru Poornima is a very auspicious day for doing vigorous Sadhana or Yogic practice and for starting any spiritual Sadhana also. This is the Ashada Poornima day. This is also known by the name Vyasa Pooja day. Sri Vyasa and the Brahma Vidya Gurus are worshipped on this day.

On this memorable day, Sri Vyasa, one of the Chiranjeevis, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, began to write his unique Brahma Sutras or Vedanta Sutras and Mahabharata Chaturmas for Sannyasins begins from this day. Sannyasins stay in one place during rainy season for four months, study Brahma Sutras and practise meditation.

Live on milk and fruits on this day and practise rigorous Japa and Dhyana. Worship your Guru and feed the Mahatmas, Sadhus and the poor. Study the Brahma Suttras and do some lacs of Japa (Anushtan or Purascharna) of your Guru Mantra or Ishta Mantra, during the Chaturmas. You will be highly benefited.

Guru is Brahman or Ishwar Himself. Guru is your real father, mother, friend, guide and saviour. The grace of the Guru is indispensable for the spiritual progress of the aspirants. The Sruti says, "To that high-souled aspirant, whose devotion to the Lord is great and whose devotion to his Guru is as great as that to the Lord, these secrets explained become illuminated."

Brahman or the Supreme Self alone is real. He is the Soul of all. He is All in all. He is the Essence of this universe. He is the Unity that never admits of a duality under all the varieties and diversities of nature. Thou art this Immortal, All-pervading, All-blissful Brahman. Thou art That. Realise this and be free—*Tat Twam Asi.*

Remember the four important verses of the Brahm Sutras. (1) "*Athatho Brahmajignasa*—Now therefor, the enquiry of Brahman." (2) "*Jan madyasya Yathah*—From which proceed the origin, etc." (3) "*Shastra Yonitwat*—The scriptures being the means of right knowledge." (4) "*Tat Tu Samanvayat*—But That because It is the main support."

Now sing: "*Jaya Guru Siva Guru Hari Guru Ram, Jagad Guru Param Gnru Sad Guru Shyam.*"

Remember and adore Sri Vyasa and the Brahma Vidya Gurus. May their blessings be upon you all !

## Dussera message

Salutations to Sri Durga (Mother Divine) Who exists in all beings in the form of intelligence, mercy.

beauty ; Who is the consort of Lord Siva ; Who creates, sustains and destroys the universe.

Dussera is the greatest Hindu festival of adoring God as Mother. Durga represents the Divine Mother. She is the energy aspect of the Lord. Without Durga, Siva has no expression and without Siva, Durga has no existence. Siva is the soul of Durga. Durga is identical with Siva. Lord Siva is only the silent witness. He is motionless, absolutely changeless. He is not affected by the cosmic play. Durga does everything.

Mother worship is the worship of God as the Divine Mother—Sri Matha. Shakti is the power of the Lord or the cosmic energy. The Divine Mother in Her aspect of Durga is represented as having ten different weapons in her hands. She is sitting on a lion. She keeps up the Lila of the Lord through the three Gunas—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Vidya, Shanti, lust, anger, greed, egoism, pride, are all Her forms,

The Upasana or worship of Devi or Universal Mother leads to the attainment of knowledge of the Self. The story of the Kena Upanishad known as the "Yaksha Prasna" supports this view. Uma taught the Truth to the Devas. Goddess Shakti sheds wisdom on Her devotees.

A child is more familior with the mother than with the father, because she is very kind, loving, tender affectionate and looks after the wants of the child. In the spiritual field also the aspirant or the devotee—the spiritual child—has intimate relationship with the

Mother Durga than with the Father Siva. It behoves, therefore, that the aspirant should approach the Mother first and She will introduce Her spiritual child to the Father for his illumination or Self-realisation.

Mother's grace is boundless. Her mercy is illimitable. Her knowledge is infinite. Her power is immeasurable. Her glory is ineffable. Her splendour is indescribable. She gives you Bhukti or material prosperity and Mukti also (liberation).

Approach Her with an open heart. Lay bare your heart to Her with frankness and humility. Be as simple as a child. Kill ruthlessly egoism cunningness, selfishness and crookedness. Make total, unreserved, ungrudging, surrender to Her. Sing Her praise. Repeat Her name. Worship Her with faith and unflinching devotion. Do special Pooja on Navaratri days. Navaratri or Dussera is the most suitable occasion for doing intense Sadhana. These nine days are very sacred to Devi. Plunge yourself in her worship. Do Anushtan. Devi fought with Bhandasura and his forces for nine days and nine nights. The war ended on the evening of the tenth day known as Vijaya Dasami day or the day of victory. Aspirants are initiated on this day. Akshara Abhyasa for children is done on the Vijaya Dasami day. The beginning of learning of any science is done on this most auspicious day. It was on this day that Arjuna worshipped the Devi before starting the fight against the Kauravas on the field of Kurukshetra.

May Durga give the milk of divine wisdom to Her children and lift them to the magnanimous heights of divine splendour and glory, the imperishable state of Kaivalya and Eternal Sunshine !!

## Deepavali message

Deepavali is the festival of lamps. It is observed almost throughout India with great pomp and show. It is a time of great rejoicing and worshipping among the Hindus and lasts for two days. This is held at the beginning of the Hindu commercial year in honour of the Goddess Lakshmi.

It commemorates that blessed day when Sri Rama returned to Ayodhya after defeating Ravana. On this day Sri Krishna killed the demon Narakasura.

In South India all take oil bath in the morning and wear new clothes. At this festival, Hindu merchants in Northern India begin their new account books and pray for success and prosperity during the coming year. The houses of the Hindus are cleaned and decorated by day and illuminated by night with earthen lamps. The best and finest illuminations are to be seen in Bombay and Amritsar. The famous Golden Temple at Amritsar is lit in the evening with thousands of lamps which are placed all over the steps of the big tank on all sides. Vaishnavites celebrate Govardhan Pooja and feed the people on a large scale (Annakoot or Samashti Bhandara).

O Ram ! The Light of lights, the self luminous inner light of Atman is ever burning steadily in the chambers of your heart. Sit quietly. Close your eyes. Withdraw the senses. Fix the mind on this supreme light (Param Jyoti) and enjoy the real Deepavali, by attaining illumination of the soul.

Egoism or Ahamkara is the real Narakasura. Kill this egoism through the sword of Atma-Gyana or knowledge of the Self, merge in Sri Krishna, the supreme light of the world, and enjoy the spiritual Deepavali of inner illumination.

He who Himself sees all, whom no one beholds, who illumines the intellect, the sun, moon and stars and the whole universe, but whom they cannot illumine,—That is Brahman. That is Atma. Celebrate the real Deepavali by living in Brahman and enjoy the eternal bliss of the soul.

The sun does not shine there, nor do the moon and the stars, nor do these lightnings shine and much less this fire. All the lights of the world cannot be compared even to a ray of the inner light of the soul. Merge yourself in this Light of lights and enjoy the supreme Deepavali.

Many Deepavali festivals have come and gone. Yet the hearts of the vast majority of persons are as dark as the new-moon night. The house is lit with the lamps but the heart is full of darkness of ignorance. O man! Wake up from the slumber of ignorance. Realise the constant and eternal light of the soul which has neither rising nor setting through meditation and Vichara or enquiry and dispel the darkness of ignorance.

May you all attain full inner illumination! May the Supreme Light of lights enlighten your understanding! May you all get the inexhaustible spiritual wealth of Atma! May you all prosper gloriously in the material and spiritual planes!!

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## ADVICE TO THE STUDENTS.

(*Recorded on the gramophone*)

Om ! Friends, you are the future hope of the motherland. You are the citizens of to-morrow. You should always think over the goal of life and live to attain the goal. The goal of life is the attainment of freedom from all sorts of misery or the state of Kaivalya or liberation from the cycle of births and deaths Lead a well-regulated moral life. Moral strength is the backbone of spiritual progress. Ethical culture is the part and parcel of spiritual Sadhana. Keep up Brahmacharya or the vow of celibacy By the observance of Brahmacharya many of the sages of yore have attained immortality. Brahmcharya is the source of new strength, vigour, vitality and success in life, and eternal happiness hereafter Loss of this vital energy is the cause of disease, miseries and premature death. Therefore, take particular care to preserve this vital energy. Practice of Brahmacharya gives good health, inner strength, peace of mind and long life. It invigorates the mind, the nerves and it helps to conserve physical and mental energy. It augments the strength and courage. It gives power to face the difficulties in the daily battle of life. A perfect Bramachari can move the world, can command nature and the five elements like Gyanadev. Develop faith in the Vedas and the power of mantras. Practise meditation daily. Take sattvic food. Do not overload the stomach. Repent for your mistakes. Admit your faults freely. Never try to hide your faults by lame excuses or by uttering falsehoods. Obey the laws of nature. Take plenty of physical exercise daily. Perform the prescribed duties at the appointed time. Develop simple living and high thinking. Give up vile imitation. Get through overhauling of your wrong samskaras you have created through bad association. Study the Upanishads, the Yoga Vashista, the Brahma Sutras and Sri Sankara's Select Works and other scriptures. Therein you will find real solace and peace. Some Western philosophers have declared "We are Christians by birth and faith but we can find the peace which the mind wants and the satisfaction the soul needs only in the Upanishads of the seers of East." Move amicably with all. Love all. Serve all. Develop adaptability and the spirit of selfless service and penetrate into the hearts of all through untiring service. This is verily advaitic realisation of unity or oneness.

# MESSAGE OF FREEDOM

(*Recorded on the Gramophone*)

OM, Children of immortality! The Lord is within you. He is seated in the heart of all beings. Whatever you see, hear, touch or feel is God. Therefore, hate not anybody, cheat not anybody, harm not anybody. Love all and be one with all. You will soon attain eternal bliss and perennial joy. Be self-disciplined. Be simple and harmonious in thought, feeling, diet and dress, Love all. Fear none. Shake off lethargy, laziness, fear. Lead the Divine Life. Be a seeker after truth or reality. Understand the Law of Dharma. Be alert and vigilant. Overcome sorrow and conflict through enquiry and reflection. Move towards freedom, perfection and eternal bliss every second. Is there any one among you who can say with emphasis and force: "Now I am a deserving aspirant. I am yearing for moksha. I have equipped myself with the four means. I have purified my heart through selfless service, kirtan and japa. I have served the Guru with faith and devotion and I have attained his grace and blessings." That man can save the world. He will soon become a cosmic beacon-light, a unique torch-bearer of wisdom, a dynamic yogi. O man! Get yourself ready now. It is a shameful thing that you have lived in vain till now and spent the life in eating, drinking, sleeping, idle gossipping and worthless pursuits. You have not done any meritorious act. The hour draws nearer. It is not too late even now. Start namasmaran, or the repetition of the Lord's Name from this second. Be sincere and earnest. Love all. You can make yourself worthy of His Grace. You can cross the formidable ocean of births and deaths and attain eternal bliss and immortality. Never miss a day in meditation. Regularity is of paramount importance. When the mind is tired, do not concentrate. Give it a little rest. Do not take heavy food at night. It will disturb your morning meditation. Japa, kirtan, pranayama, satsang or association with sages, practice of sama (serenity), dama (self-restraint), Yama (right conduct), satvic or pure food, study of scriptures, meditation, vichara (atmic enquiry) all will help you to control the mind and attain eternal bliss and immortality. If evil thoughts enter your mind, do not use your will force to drive them away. You will lose your energy. OM.

## CHAPTER VIII

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

# Chapter VIII—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

## Viveka Prasnottari

Q : Where can you find eternal happiness ?
A : In your own Atma within.
Q : Which is the most troublesome organ ?
A : Tongue.
Q : Who is your terrible enemy ?
A : Mind.
Q : Who is your best friend ?
A : Sat-sangh or association with the wise.
Q : Who is your real father ?
A : Guru.
Q : Which is the best language ?
A : Language of the heart.
Q : Which is the best virtue ?
A : Brahmacharya.
Q : Which is the worst intoxicant ?
A : Lust.
Q : Which is the most sacred river ?
A : Brahma Gyana.
Q : Who is the real king ?
A : A Jivanmukta or liberated sage.
Q : Which is the best Dharma
A : Selfless service.
Q : Which is the worst quality ?
A : Anger.

Q : Which is the best thing in this world ?

A : Pain (because it is the eye-opener, it goads you to seek liberation.

Q : Which is the best food ?

A : Hearing of the Srutis or Upanishads.

Q : Who is the best man ?

A : A kind-hearted man.

Q : Who is the worst man ?

A : A selfish man.

Q : Where is the worst hell ?

A : In the mind filled with jealousy, crookedness and hatred.

Q : Where is the best heaven ?

A : In the heart filled with love, mercy and generosity.

Q : Which is the best science ?

A : Brahma Vidya or scienceof Atma.

Q : Which is the most precious thing in this world ?

A : Vairagya or dispassion.

Q : Who is the strongest man ?

A : He who practises Ahimsa, he who can bear insults, injuries and persecutions with a smiling face.

Q : Who is a weak man ?

A : An irritable man.

Q : Who is the happiest man ?

A : A Thyagi or a man of renunciation.

Q : Who is the most miserable man ?

A : A rich man.

Q : Who is the most beautiful man ?

A : A Yogi.

Q : Who is the ugliest man ?

A : A greedy man.

Q : Who is a beggar ?

A : He who has desires.

Q : Which is the biggest ocean ?

A : Ocean of Bliss (Brahman or Atma).

Q : Which is the most dangerous thing in this world ?

A : Company of a worldly man.

Q : Which is the greatest temptation ?

A : Woman for a man, man for a woman.

Q : Which is the most desirable thing ?

A : Brahma Gyana.

Q : Who is the best engine driver ?

A : God.

Q : Which is the wonderful machine or engine ?

A : Mind.

Q : Which is the biggest factory in this world ?

A : Mental factory.

Q : Who is a real drunkard ?

A : He who is intoxicated with the pride of wealth and learning.

Q : Who is a real blind man ?

A : He who has no inner divine eye or the eye of intuition.

Q : Who is the real cobbler ?

A : He who thinks that the body is Atma and talks always of matters concerning the body.

Q : What is your foremost duty ?

A : To find out this hidden driver of this body-engine, to love Him, to live for Him, to serve Him, to know Him, to realise Him, to live in Him and to merge in Him.

Q: Why the All-merciful God created pain in this world ?

A: Pain is the only blessing in this world. It is the eye-opener. Man would never attempt to attain salvation if there had not been any pain in this world.

Q: How can I know whether I have purity of mind or not ?

A: If you have Vairagya (dispassion or indifference to sensual enjoyments), that is a sign of Chitta Suddhi or purity of mind. No sensual desires or Vasanas will arise in the mind.

Q: What is the purpose of God creating the world ?

A: This is a transcendental question or Ati-prasna. You will know the purpose when you attain Self-realisation or Brahma Gyana. The finite mind that is conditioned in time, space and causation cannot get an answer for a question that relates to transcendental matters.

Q: What is the use of repeating the Mantra again and again ?

A: It gives force. It intensifies the spiritual Samskaras.

Q: When I concentrate, so many thoughts arise in my mind. How can I avoid them ? Can I suppress them ?

A: Do not try to suppress them with force. The thoughts will manifest with redoubled force. They will rise up frequently also. You will tax your will and waste your energy. Be of these a silent witness thoughts. Say unto yourself: "I have no concern with these thoughts." Be indifferent. All useless worldly thoughts will die by themselves.

Q: How to prevent bad dreams?

A: Study any religious book. Meditate for half an hour just before retiring to bed. You will have no bad dreams.

Q: What are the signs of a person who has no Ahamkara or egoism?

A: He will not identify himself with his body. He will be free from pride, likes, dislikes, jealousy, anger and hypocrisy.

Q: Why does evil exist in the world?

A: Change the angle of vision or Dhrishti. All evils will disappear. Evil is negative good. Evil exists to glorify good. It has a *raison de'tre*, reason for its existence. Evil and good are relative terms. What is good at one time is evil at another time. What is good for one is evil for another. Understand this and become wise. Behold the one Atma in all forms and beings. Evil and good are mental creations. Transmute evil into good by Atma Drishti. There is good in evil also.

Q: How to lead the life of unity?

A: This is attained by service, charity, sharing what you have with others, cultivating cosmic love and realising the one Atma seated in the hearts of all, through constant Brahmachintan or meditation on Atma.

# APPENDIX

## YOGA MUSEUM

# *The Yoga Museum*

## (*A Word-Picture*)

"What cannot be learnt by a hundred years of study can be learnt here in one hour !"

"This indeed is one of the wonders of the world !"

"This is the most novel idea of imparting religious knowledge."

These are the words inwhich the Yoga Museum has been described by many of the distinguished visitors from the East and the West, who have during the years 1948 – 1949 visited Ananda Kutir, the seat of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest University.

The Sage of Ananda Kutir, Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, with an insight into the state of the materliasm-cologged mind of the busy modern man—busy for nothing, busy in merely keeping the wolf off his door and in satisfying the turbulent senses by exciting them !—invented this effective method of educating Man in the essence of Yoga and Vedanta by a pictorial representation of them. In the mind of this great Yogi-genious was the Yoga Museum born.

Years of careful planning by Sri Swami Chidanandaji, the illustrious Principal of the Forest University, and one of the foremost disciples of the Sage ; have gone into this Museum which is now acclaimed as one of the wonders of the world.

In the following pages we give a short summary of what the Yoga Museum teaches you.

# YOGA MUSEUM.

**THE PHILOSOPHY :** The aim and object and goal of all aspirations of Man is to realise the Absolute The absolute is, by its very nature, nameless and formless. This is the Unmanifest Brahman. It is the realisation of this Brahman which is the goal of all beings. the goal pointed out by all the religions of the world. Its Name (or the Name of this Nameless One) is given in the scriptures to be the Pranava—OM This Pranava is the representation of the Supreme, the Name of the Supreme Brahman. It is OM from which the world came, in which the world subsists, and to which it will return.

This idea is represented in the Museum by the picture of OMKAR. It is followed by the OMKARA Stotram, very useful for Sadhakas who meditate on this Great Monosyllable, the Word.

By the side of this OMKAR you find the picture of the Trimurthis. These Trimurthis are the Primordial Manifestations of the Unmanifest. What all we see—all these names and forms—this universe—has its origin at this stage of manifestation. The Trimurthis represent the three States—Utpatti, Sthiti and Laya. Brahma creates ; Vishnu sustains ; Rudra destroys.

Though these "duties" are ascribed to the Trimurthis, actually the Trimurthis do not perform these functions Themselves. This Lila is carried on by Them through Their Shaktis. This idea is represented by the picture just below Brahma Shakti (Saraswati), Vishnn-Shakti

(Lakshmi), Shiva-Shakti (Parvati) are the dynamic aspects of the Trinity. For, they carry out this triple process of creation, preservation and destruction. The Creative Power of the Brahma Shakti or Vidya Shakti is Saraswati. Then comes the Sustaining Power—that which preserves—or the Vishnu Shakti or Lakshmi. Whatevet is necessary for the preservation of this world, whatever we need to live in this world—food, clothing, power, strength, wealth, courage, etc., are all the aspects of Lakshmi (the Ashta-Lakshmi). Then comes Shiva-Shakti or Parvati or Kali or Durga. It is Her power that brings about the Laya of the Universe.

The picture of Lord Dattatreya by the side of that of the Trimurthis reminds you that the three Murtis are but aspects of the One and not essentially different. Lord Dattatreya represents in Himself the three aspects of the Supreme Lord, of the Synthesis of the Trimurthis and stands there as the positive proof of their unity.

Similarly on the Shakti-side, too, the inclusion in the picture of Maha-Shakti denotes that all the Shaktis are aspects of the One, as the Devi Herself has emphatically declared in the Devi Mahatmya. The One Lord through His Power as Brahma-Shakti creates; as Vishnu-Shakti He preserves; as Shiva-Shakti He destroys.

It is in this Lord, the Ishwara, that the world had its origin. Therefore, the world has its root in the Supreme, above. Lord Krishna has picturesquely described this idea in the first few slokas of the fifteenth chapter of the Gita. This Samsara Vriksha is here shown below the Shaktis. The root is above—the Lord; and the huge tree (the universe) has grown underneath with numberless branches.

Thus is the essence of Hindu philosophy given through a few pictures.

This sublime philosophy has its home in India. This truth is the heart of our beloved Bharatamata who stands here as the central idol. Westerners, no doubt, have tried to approach to the heights which the Eastern mystics have reached; but there are few examples of Sages probing into the very heart of this Great Mystery anywhere except in India. It is through the treasure hidden in the heart of Bharatamata that the world has striven to understand this mystery. It is She who has ever remained as the World Preceptor, showing humanity the Supreme Goal and the methods to reach that Goal.

The illustrious sons of Bharatamata who have preserved the sacred science of Yoga or the method of this realisation and whose ceaseless endeavour has left us a heritage at once richest and most sublime, are shown in the next picture—all proceeding from the One Lord and descending into the world, to serve it and to lead humanity into the Kingdom of the Lord.

The next picture shows you the most important among these. Lord Brahma Himself: He is the one who imparted this Gyana at first. Then you have Veda-Vyasa who divided the Vedas, and arranged them. Is is he who gave us the priceless Mahabharata which contains the gem of the Gita as well as elaborate discourses on Dharma. Then we have Shankaracharya, the originator of the philosophy of Advaita, a great Gyani who is considered an Avatar. And, then, you have Sri Narada who through his Bhakti Sutras laid down the Bhakti-Marga. He is the propounder of one of the most ancient paths to God. The modern exponent of Bhakti represented here is. Lord Gouranga. Above all, you have Lord Krishna Himself Who is the Param-Guru—the Supreme Being, the Shodasa-kala-Avatar, Who descended on this earth-plane just to re-awaken in Man a living faith in the Supreme and Who also showed the Path of Karma-Yoga and the Yoga of Synthesis. You have then the Acharyas of the other Margas. Siva taught Hata Yoga to Parvati. This is recorded in the Siva Sambita. Matsyendranath and Gorakhnath are the very embodiments of Hata Yoga Sadhana.

If Bharata Mata is the Supreme Abode, the Treasury of this priceless treasure, the Ashrams of Saints and sages of all ages are the very rooms in which this priceless treasure has for ever been preserved. This plant of Yoga, this plant of philosophy and this plant of the Shad-Darshanas, has for ever grown in the garden of these Ashrams. A typical Ashram scenery has, therefore been included in this Section.

**BASES OF YOGA SADHANA :** What are the bases of Yoga Sadhana, in general ? What are the primary and fundamental qualifications which every aspirant should invariably possess if he is to progress satisfactorily on the Path ? These questions are answered by the next two pictures.

"We have turned away from the world. We proceed now to the Supreme Abode". Say the two pilgrims who are shown here with matted locks, staff in hand, proceeding on the rugged path of Nivritti. Vairagya—this is most essential if anything noble is to be achived. without mentally renouncing the petty objects, the names and forms, and attachment to the world, the Sadhaka will not be able to proceed towards the Goal.

"The Gate Way to Bliss," which is portrayed in the next picture, has a threshold of Yama-Niyama. The two pillars that support the gateway are Viveka and Vairagya. The tower lights that serve to illumine the path are watch-words SERVE and LOVE. This is Divine Life in short: and this is the Grand Way of Attainment. The "Kingdom of Heaven" which is described just above this illustration, gives in a nutshell the Way of Attainment also.

**GYANA YOGA:** Then we come to the Section of Vedanta Sadhana or Gyana Yoga.

Without knowing about anything, we will never have any idea about it. If Raga or Dwesha is to be aroused in our mind, the idea about the thing towards which we are to entertain these feelings has to be put in. Even so in the case of the Supreme, we should first "hear" adout the Truth. This is Sravana. Only then will we come to awaken in us a desire to realise It. We should attend Sat Sang of Mahatmas, sit at their feet and listen attentively to what they say.

Many of us are frequently blessed with the opportunity of having such Sat Sang. But very few of us make the best use of it. The next and all-important Sadhana, therefore, is to REFLECT, to think about the Truth that is expounded by the Mahatmas. There is very little use in merely listening to the discourses of Saints if we are not going to sit and think of what has been said and how we should imbibe their teachings. This is termed by the ancients as MANAN.

The third picture below represents NIDHIDHYASAN or deep meditation on the Truths heard and reflected upon. Then the Truths become part of our very being—we realise the Truth, we have actual direct perception or Aparokshanobhuti. No more are the Truths matters of heresy to us. No more need we say: 'He said so!" but we shall boldly decleare: "I have realised this to be the Truth."

The picture by the side of this trio sounds a note of warning. The inner evil forces in the Sadhaka often assail him in his meditation, and try to obstruct his progress. Their hideous faces try to frighten him: their pleasant countenances tempt him away from the Path. But, remember: they have no purpose other than to try to side-track his endeavours and make all his endeavours infructuous. These have all to be ruthlessly slain.

What is the way out, then? What is the weapon to kill these with? It is Ekagrata. Perfect, one-pointed concentration. The hunter with his bow and arrow tells you that. You have to learn this lesson from him: you have to apply yourself with such one-pointed attention to your Sadhana as the hunter has when he aims at the object or the target. For him the world does not exist. Not even his own body—nothing exists. He sees, the target. He fixes his attention upon it. His mind becomes one with it. He never misses the aim. The arrow strikes the target as sure as the sun rises in the East. If you have that Ekagrata, you will certainly be able to overcome all the obstacles in meditation and reach the goal.

Whilst Ekagrata is the all-important factor in Gyana Sadhana, there are other aids or auxiliaries, too. The next picture represents all these. Sat Sang or the company of devotees and aspirants, of Mahatmas and Saints, is one for the most potent tonics for a Sadhaka, which keep up his spiritual vigour at a high pitch. They enable his mind to dwell constantly on the Goal-Self-realisation.

Tirtha-Yatra : This reminds the Sadhaka of the lives of holy men and attunes him to the special vibrations of the Sacred Places. It brings to his mind the various Lilas of the Lord of which the various Tirthas are constant reminders.

Solitude : preserves the seed of spirituality in him, nourishes it and enables it to grow in the garden of the Sadhaka's heart. In solitude, whan man is away from the din and bustle of worldly environs, nature aids him to dive within himself and to bring out the pearl of wisdom. His mind is undisturbed by external foes. He is free from the influence of objective forces. He experiences peace : and in a peaceful mood, the mind is able to soar to greater heights of spiritual splendour.

Eternal vows, like Satyam, Ahimsa, Brahmacharya, etc. Once the Sadhaka constructs a strong moral fortress around himself with the help of these vows. he is unassailed by any evil force. That is implied by the picture below of Lord Buddha who was the very embodiment of the Great Vows of Truth and Non-violence.

Lastly, as indeed the driver of the chariot in the picture forcibly restrains the wild horses with the help of the reins, the Sadhaka should firmly restrain his senses with the help of his Buddhi illumined by Viveka, and prevent them from running amok. Then only will he be able to proceed along the right Path to the Supreme Abode. He should be the controller of the senses ; but he should not allow the senses to control him. He should be their master, but he should not allow them to be his masters.

The picture next to this gives you what the Yogi with all the above qualifications, who performs the three-fold Gyana Sadhana, attains. The seven Gyana Bhumikas are shown in this : Shubechcha, Vicharana, Tanumanasi, Satwapatti, Asamsakti, Padarthabhavana, and lastly Turiya.

The chart of Adwaita-Vedanta shows the knowledge that has been gained by the sages of yore through such Sadhana. The chart gives at a glance the Siddhantha of Sri Shankaracharya

**BHAKTI YOGA** : Then we come to the Devotee's Path—the Bhakti Yoga. As you all know, the mind wants a Name and a Form to cling to. Few Sadhakas can rise up all at once to the heights of the Formless meditation. The mind is unable to grasp things that are formless and nameless. The first picture in this group represents the Bhakta looking into the Beyond for his Beloved, whom he could love and on whom he could centre his whole mind.

In the picture below you see that the Lord—a Form, an Avatara descending from the Beyond in answer to the prayer of His devotees. The all-compassionate Divine thus fulfils the devout prayer of His children and provides them with a Name and a From through which they could reach the Absolute, the Nameless-Formless Brahman.

The two pictures below give you some of the important manifestations of the Unmanifest God, Brahman. Here you have the major ten Avataras as well as the minor ones—according to the Bhagavatha enumeration.

The five main devotional attitudes are then represented in the next picture. Santa Bhava; the attitude of quiescent Upasana, where the Sadhaka meditates on the Lord in his own heart, in peace. Sakhya Bhava: where the devotee adopts the attitude of friendship towards the Lord. Dasya Bhava: where the devotee considers himself the servant of the Lord. Vatsalya Bhava; where the devotee considers the Lord as his child. And, Madhurya Bhava: where the devotee takes up the attitude of the Beloved of the Lord and gives himself up entirely to His Love.

In the next picture you find the Navadha Bhakti or the nine modes of devotion. Sravan: the devotee hears about His Lilas Kirtan: he sings the Lord's Names with intense devotion. Smaran: the devotee thinks of the Lord constantly. Padasevan : the Bhakta delights in the service of His Chosen Deity. Archan : he worships the Lord in His Archavatara. Vandan : he bows to His Form or Image with all his heart. Dasya : he considers himself the servant of the Lord. Sakhya : he regards himself as the Lord's friend. Lastly comes Atmanivedan : the devotee surrenders himself at His Lotus Feet ; dedicates his body, mind and soul to Him, and says with all his heart : "My Lord ! I am Thine." He then becomes one with his beloved.

Several supreme examples of these Bhavas are then shown. Kausalya greets the baby-Rama with food : Yaṣoda and the Gopis play with the boy-Krishna (Bala-Krishna)—ideals of Vatsalya Bhava. Then, there is Uddhava who is the ideal of Sakhya-Bhava. Hanuman is the supreme example of Dasya Bhava. Mira is the modern practical exponent of Madhurya Bhava and Surdas of Santa-Prema Bhava.

Two illustrious examples of Bhakti are separately given to impress upon the spectator the Ideal of Devotion—they are Prahlada and Chaitanya. Even at the point of death, the devotee wants only the Lord, naught else. He does not give up his devotion even when he is threatened with death. Look at Prahlad. A gleaming sword could not frighten him. Nor did the rising tide of the ocean disturb the devotion of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Surely enough, the Lord protects the devotees : Narasimha emanates from the pillar ; and the ocean refuses to advance towards Chaitanya.

Below these are arranged pictures that illustrate the various mystic visions and trance-experiences of devotees. In deep contemplation the Christian saint "sees" Lord Christ. During devout worship, the Bhakta "sees" the Lord. While repeating His Name, the Japa Yogi "sees" the Lord; so does another while praying to Him. Chaitanya enters into Samadhi and "sees" Sri Krishna and Radha during ecstatic Kirtan. The blind Kirtanist with Krishna standing beside him tells you that this "seeing" is not what you take the expression to mean: the physical eyes have no value in this perception: it is through the Inner Eye of Intuition that the Bhakta perceives the Lord.

Next you will find the beautiful illustration which gives you the very essence of Bhakti Yoga Sadhana. The heart is shown here. That is where the Bhakta worships the Lord. He feels that he is drowning in the ocean of Samsara. He raises his hands above the waves and clings to the Lotus Feet of the Lord. Surely by this absolute self-surrender, he attains the Lord. The Lord rescues him from this ocean and takes him to His bosom. The devotee enjoys Sayujya Mukti.

**RAJA YOGA:** Next we come to Raja Yoga. This is also known by the name Ashtanga Yoga. The Eight Angas are illustrated in the first picture: Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi which culminates in Asamprajnata Samadhi.

The most essential point in Raja Yoga, or the Basic Principle, is Chitta-Vritti Nirodhah, or the quelling of the mental modifications. This is represented by the picture of Lord Krishna dancing on the thousand-hooded Kaliya. The esoteric significance of this Lila of the Lord is said to be this. The mind has numberless heads The Vrittis are numberless. Every moment the mind assumes the from of various Vrittis. Ceaseless stream of countless Vrittis alone constitutes the mind. The Vasanas which are hidden in the sub-conscious mind manifest themselves in the form of Vrittis. The Sadhaka has to secure effective control over them by restraining them and destroying them. Then and then alone will he be established in Yoga or perfect union with the Lord.

The ideals of Ahimsa (Lord Buddha and his modern counterpart Mahatma Gandhiji) are shown, as Ahimsa represents one of the five Yamas which along with Niyamas are the most important qualifications of a student of Raja Yoga. The third step of Asanology is also shown here. The fourth is the perfect purification of the Pranic Sheath through Pranayama the fourth step in Raja Yoga.

The illustration above these shows the Shad Chakras from the Muladhara where the Kundalini Shakti lies dormant to the Sahasrara where the Shakti attains Her Union with Siva, the Supreme Paramatma. This also shows the other Chakras through which the awakened Kundalini passes. The picture at the top, of Siva and Shakti sitting on the Sahasra-dala-Padma represents the culminating point of this Yoga—the union of the Jivatma and the Paramatma.

OM is the Mantra of the Supreme, according to Raja Yoga. And, Trataka is one of the important exercises to which the Sadhaka resorts for developing concentration, the sixth stage in Raja Yoga Sadhana. OM is also the object of meditation or Dhyana, the next or seventh stage. The final stage is Samadhi when the meditator fully merges in OM.

A recipe for Brahmacharya—one of the important Yama, is also placed in this Section. Without Brahmacharya nothing can be achieved in the spiritual path. It is Brahmacharya that produces the Ojas Shakti in the Sadhaka with the help of which he is able to contemplate on the Atman. It is Brahmacharya that gives him dispassion or Vairagya. It is this that bestows on his mind Peace which is the most essential pre-requisite to all Sadhana.

The short poem which is included in this Section gives the Ashtanga Yoga in a nutshell.

**KARMA YOGA:** Let us pass on to the next Section—Karma Yoga. The Scripture for Karma Yogins is the Gita. Therefore, Lord Krishna delivering the Message of the Gita to Arjuna adorns the top of this Section. It is the Gita Ideal of Yoga that the Sadhaka aspires to reach.

What does the Gita teach? In short: WORK but without attachment and without expectation of reward. The battle-field scene reminds you that this sacred teaching is not an other-worldly attitude, but that the principles of Karma Yoga Sadhana are to be applied to our daily active life in the world.

The placard below sums up the teachings of the Gita : WORK IS WORSHIP : DEDICATE IT TO GOD. Consider every action of yours as an act of worship of the Lord. This is the secret with the help of which you will be able to convert all your actions—whatever they be—into an act of worship. Even your daily household duties you can convert into Yoga Sadhana. Those very actions which were ties, which bound you to the wheel of Samsara ; those very actions which perpetuated this birth-death cycle ; when those very actions are performed in the spirit of the Gita Ideal, will release you from this bondage, will release you from the cycle of birth and death and will liberate you from Samsara-Chakra. The point to be remembered in this connection is selflessness. Never do anything with a selfish motive. This is what the picture of the Lotus tells you. Be IN the world, by all means ; but be not OF the world. Never allow the world to taint you ; let the actions leave no trace behind, as the water on the lotus-leaf.

Not that by non-attachment is meant hap-hazard performance of actions. On the contrary, the Yogi gives his heart and soul to the work he has undertaken. Witness the case of the greatest Karma Yogin, Lord Krishna Himself. In the picture below are seen His Lilas which illustrate this point. The Purna Avatara (Krishna) Who lived every moment of His earthly existence in the fullest consciousness of His Divinity, He acted as the charioteer of Arjuna—and performed His self-imposed duty well indeed. At the conclusion of the day's service as the charioteer, he would not just let some one else do the cleaning of the horses and tending to them. He would himself lead the horses to the tank, bathe them, dress their wounds and safely lead them to the stables.

All acts are acts of worship. The Karma Yogi never considers any act as menial service. Look at Lord Krishna washing with His own hands the feet of the guests at Pandavas' Rajasuya Yagna.

Medical aid occupies the highest place in Karma Yoga Sadhana. Relieving the suffering of the diseased is perhaps the greatest self-purifier. It cleanses the heart quickly and enables the divine light to shine brilliantly within. It develops the Sadhaka's heart. It implants love in his heart. The Sadhaka sees the Lord in the patient. The heart melts. The Lord takes His seat in it. Then the Sadhaka perceives the Lord and Him alone everywhere. He loves all and serves all. The medical-aid-kit reminds you of this.

In the household life, the ancients have prescribed the Pancha Maha Yagnas for the Grihastha's self-purification. Rishi Yagna : Swadhyaya and Pravachana. Pitri-Yagna : Tarpan and oblations. Deva Yagna : fire-oblations in the form of Agni-hotra. Manushya Yagna ; charity and Athiti-Pujan. Bhuta-Yagna ; offering food to the animals These effectively counteract the various "inevitable" sins he daily commits often unconsciously.

For a Karma Yogi the devoted service of the preceptor is indispensable. Witness in the picture, Lord Rama and Lakshmana shampooing the feet of

Vishwamitra. Lord Krishna, too, served His preceptor, Sandipini, most devotedly.

The Karma Yogi sees the Lord alone in everything. The Viswa-Rupa Darshan connotes this : as also the picture below where the devotee perceives the indwelling Lord in the cow, dog, elephant, chandala and Brahmana ; The entire creation is for him the Virat Swaroopa of the Lord Himself. He realises that the Lord alone (in the words of the Upanishads) pervades the entire creation.

Therefore, he considers himself the servant of humanity. He is himself only a nimitta in the Lord. The ideal leaders who exemplified this principle in their own life are next shown-Gandhiji and Shivaji, Shivaji had offered his entire kingdom at the feet of his Guru Samarth Ramdas and carried on the affairs of the state only as his Guru's instrument. Through constant introspection and self-analysis the Sadhaka should find but how far he has progressed towards the Gita-Ideal of Perfection. He should always try to weed out the evil qualities that lurk within him and to develop Deivi-Sampatti.

The other servants of humanity who have from time to time delivered this message of service of humanity are shown in the next illustration. Lord Buddha, Lord Jesus, Lord Zoroaster, Lord Jina or Mahaveera and in our own times, Lord Sivananda—all Messengers of Karma Yoga.

**MAHA YOGA :** Last, but not least, comes the Maha Yoga whose first exponent is Lord Swami Sivanandaji

Maharaj himself. This Yoga is illustrated here in the form of various leaflets and pamphlets and books that have issued forth from the mighty pen of this Maha Yogi of today.

Maha Yoga is otherwise called THE DISSEMINATION OF SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE. As has already been pointed out, man will not aspire to seek after the Truth unless and until he knows about Its glory and the need to realise It, as also the methods of realising It. The dissemination of this most vital knowledge is therefore, of supreme importance.

In other words, this Yoga is also called Jnana Dhana or Jnana Yagna. All other forms of charity have a short-lived merit : all other gifts have a temporary use. All other objects of charity are evanescent. They do not satisfy the beneficiary for long. You give food to a hungry man. Ere half the day has passed, he feels hungry again. You give him money : it is quickly spent and the man is in want again. Whereas if you create in him a thirst for treading the spiritual path, and if you impart to him a knowledge of this spiritual path, of Divine Life, and of the essential methods of realising God, you would be giving Man some thing of permanent value, you give him some thing with the help of which he can quench his thirst once and for all, with the help of which he can reach the supreme and enjoy Eternal Satisfaction, Supreme Peace and Inexpessible Bliss. What more can he want ? Charity cannot be more glorious.

In this section is included a Trisul. This is the present-day Siva's Trisul. The enemy, worldliness, is is attacked by the Sadhaka who follows Sri Swamiji Maharaj, with the three-pronged Trisul—Resolves, Daily Routine, and Spiritual Diary. This is a novel invention of Sri Swamiji Maharaj. As was pointed out elsewhere, adoption of Vows is one of the most important limbs of Yoga. Sri Swamiji Maharaj has brought into his Resolves Form the most essential vows that every Sadhaka should take if he wants to have rapid evolution. These vows are then embodied in a spiritual daily routine. And to provide him with the necessary incentive to stick to these resolves, he is asked to maintain the spiritual diary wherein he records his daily Sadhana. The diary enables him to check upon his progress and to aspire to evolve more and more rapidly.

Some of the articles with the help of which Sri Swamiji Maharaj has taken the Message of Divine Life to every door are exhibited. Most important among them, of course, are the books. Then come the small pamphlets and booklets. Then the leaflets which find their way into the hearth and home of the poorest man, the atheist, the agnostic, all and sundry, and awakens in every one a desire to tread the spiritual path. The leaflet entitled TWENTY IMPORTANT SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTIONS is worth being printed in gold. The essence of all the Scriptures has been given in these twenty instructions by Sri Swamiji Maharaj for the busy Sadhaka of today to follow. Then you have the Magazines, "The Divine Life" which is today appearing in many Indian languages besides the English edition, the "Wisdom Light" which is sent to Members of the Divine

Life Society, and "The Divine Life Forest University Weekly". A curious addition is the Gramophone Record Persons thousands of miles away from the abode of Sri Swamiji Maharaj can, with the help of these records actually hear Sri Swamiji Maharaj's Kirtan in their own room: and Sri Swamiji Maharaj will sing them into an ecstatic mood.

It is this Maha Yoga that is the urgent need of the hour. There should be the widest dissemination of spiritual knowledge if the world is to be weaned away from the path of vice, from doom and destruction; if humanity is to be saved in time from the approaching calamity of self-destruction, to which it is heading, prompted by modern science and materialism.

# STORY OF SWAMI SIVANANDA

# STORY OF SWAMI SIVANANDA

## A Scholar's Tribute—I

Sri K. S. Venkataramani, M.A., B.L.
Advocate, Supreme Court of India,
Author of "Murugan the Tiller", etc.

In the evening hours of my life, on these wind-swept and water-laved sand-dunes of this ancient and holy village at the confluence of the Cauvery and the sea (Kaveripoompatinam), Swami Sivanandaji's books and writings are to me the greatest solace and inspiration and blessings. I see clearer and better the lofty, ntricate ascending spiral to the footstool of God, and my foot-steps have gained in faith, firmness and movement by his blessings and books.

* * *

### "Forest University Weekly"

"The Yoga-Vedanta Forest University Weekly" is an admirable and rare production the like of, I have not seen in the chaotic plethora of modern journalism. This Weekly is truly Sivanandarishta or Advaitarista, distilled from the infinite varieties, of rare leaves and flowers, roots and bark of our ancient culture, for the renovation of the body, mind and soul of India. How I wish at least a million copies of this "Forest Weekly", so full of true honey, go every week to our famished students and even more to our famished politicians. This is my humble prayer to the Lord of the Seven Hills.

## A Scholar's Tribute—II

**Professor R.C. Mahendra, M.A.,D. Litt.,**
**Kotah (Rajasthan)**

**Brahma Sutras** is full of deep and original thought fluently and vigorously rendered in English by your powerful pen. With its deep insight and religious fervour, it is a masterpiece of religious literature.

**What Becomes of the soul after death** is an etirely original work of philosophy showing the vast knowledge of divine affairs. The buoyant style and freshness of material gives rare pleasure to readers. You are one of the most lively writers of Philosophy.

**Science of Pranayam** is an original contribution to the science of health. I was delighted to find that this book is all based on practical knowledge.

**Easy steps to Yoga** is a uniqne volume on Yoga. The book is very popular with young and old alike. The essays are full of wisdom, charmingly expressed by one whose love of Yoga is evident throughout.

(*N.B. The above-mentioned works are by Sri Swami Sivanandaji*)

* * *

## "The Divine Life"

I have been a regular reader of the excellent magazine "The Divine Life", in which I have read many of the Swamiji's writing. The joys and glories of the spirtual heritage of our country are being passed on by the great Swamiji to the people of the world with the object of helping mankind.

—General K.M. Cariappa,
Commander-in-Chief, Indian Army.

"The Divine Life" is a solace to millions.

—Yogi Suddhananda Bharatiar, Pondicherry

* * *

We greatly admire your wonderful magazine "The Divine Life" and respect the unique teachings it contains.

—Rev. Dr. J.L Wisdom, Ph.D., D.D
Pujili, Equador (South America)

* * *

The thoughts expressed through the columns of "The Divine Life" are so attractive to me because they show the Way to God not as a dogma but as a reality.

—Dr. Tanis Palape,
Bonn, Western Germany.

* * *

Your letters are like the drops of ambrosia to me and to the Sangha. Our thoughts after our daily devotion in the evening often turn to our holy Gurus in the Himavat and to your Holiness.

Dr. H. P. Sastri,
Shanti Sadan, London.

Swamiji's "Japa Yoga" and "Philosophy and Meditation on OM" have been of great help to me and have brought much peace to my wavering mind.

P.C Pande, B.A., LL.B.,
Almora.

"Sayings of Sivananda" to the English knowing world is no other than the Vedanṭa Sutras of the Rishis of ancient India, concretised in other words, the hidden treasures of spiritual wealth unknown to mankind outside India.

A. Sivaramakrishna Iyer,
Trichinopoly.

**Siva Lilas :** This is a small handy look running into 111 pages depicting about "Siva Lilas" in the Hindu religion. Siva plays a very important part in the spiritual life of the people. The monumental temples in southern India as well as some temples in nothern India testify to the great respect held by the people to Siva and His Consort. In the first section, the learned Swamiji explains Siva Tattwa ; in the second he explains the significance of Siva worship ; in the third section he describes Daksha Yagna and in the fourth section he gives an account of Parvathi's wedding and in the fifth he throws much light on Nayanars and in the subsequent four parts he gives the accounts of four important Nayanars. As many of the people are ignorant of Siva Tattwa as well as the significance of Siva worship, the Swamiji has done an immense service to the Hindu religion and we commend the book to the public.

The Coimbatore Times—VII-22.

**Philosophy and Teachings :** Those of the admirers and devotees who have missed any of the books by Swamiji would welcome this bulky volume wherein is compiled the quintessence of his teachings on various subjects. The first part of the book gives the theory of Yoga, a knowledge of which is an essential preliminary for the actual practice of the only method available for aspirants and the second part gives the process by which one can elevate oneself. The book is issued to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of the Swamiji.

Sunday Times—Madras—14-12-1947.

I am glad you have been admitted to the Ashrama-fold by his Holiness Swami Sivananda Saraswati whose wisdom sparks throughout the universe I felt as if I had grown one foot taller and millionfold richer when I recived a copy of "Wisdom Sparks" from him. The truth is that Wisdom as such does not generally spark, except to the man who can see and enjoy the spark. The Ashramam and the inmates are ladders whereby the common man is enabled to forget the mortal shackles and reach the upper floor where he can enjoy the beauties of God and nature.

S. A. R. Chary, B A.,
Ministry of Industries and Supply,
New Delhi.

Thy loving words and blessings are more than happiness for me. I note thy kind instructions. However, I cannot forget or lose the opportunity in this life when I have full confidence in thy words : "I will serve you nicely and take you unto Ram. May he bless you with infinite Love."

R. Srinivasan. (Madras)

My youngest boy used to get fever. In one attack he had convulsions and infantile paralysis. Your Holiness's name was written on a piece of paper and tied to the child's right arm. The child is all right now. Miraculous is the power of thy name.

M. V. Mangalamurthi. (Mysore)

I am and the members of my family bow down in humble obeisance to your lotus feet. Your great blessings together with the two books, Spiritual Lessons and the Sage of Ananda Kutir, have been duly received. I express my deep gratefulness for this grace and am profiting by them as much as I can.

M. P. Tripati,
Deputy Secretary, P. W. D.,
U. P. Govt. Lucknow.

# AN EPITOME OF HINDUISM

## ALL ABOUT HINDUISM

(Sri Swami Sivananda. Published by the Sivananda. Publication League, Rishikesh. Price Rs. 4)

A modest title as it is, no other title could more fully describe the contents of this remarkable book. It is remarkable in many ways. It is verily an epitome of Hinduism, its meaning, its holy writ, its history, ethics, rituals, philosophy, mythology, sets and of the four Yoga paths. To have compressed all this within the narrow compass of a single handy book is a feat; to have told it all so simply and so lucidly is a high intellectual achievement; to have presented this mammoth material in an amazingly objective manner with no bees in the bonnet and not endentious remarks is a work worthy of emulation. Religion, philosophy and ethics are the fatal rocks on which many an author has floundered. Generally angularities and prejudices prevail in many writings of this nature and authors on such subjects soon find themselves baited on irrelevancies and trivialities. Here is profound learning without any pretence, abiding care and sanity in adumbrating the canons of probably the most ancient of human faiths. This is almost a miracle and one cannot help being struck at once by the unusual gifts of the author.

There is perhaps no other book in English Language which in such a limited space gives so much on such a complex theme like Hinduism A better edition of the book should be made available to the European and American public, and it is sure to dispel many illusions and perverted notions with which Hinduism is still regarded abroad. It is up to date in details, drawing for its material even on the census reports. Clarity in exposition and sustained poise distinguish this highly valuable work.—

"THE HINDUSTAN TIMES"
*May 22, 1950, New Delhi.*

# DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

## ACTIVITIES

1. *The Headquarters* of the Society is housed in Ananda Kutir on the banks of the Ganges at Rishikesh. Here labour a band of Sanyasins, whose lives are entirely dedicated to the service of humanity. They learn and put into practice the Yoga of Synthesis and function actively for this dynamic spiritual centre.

2 *The Sivananda Publication League* looks after the publication of the inspiring and invaluable literature of Sri Swami Sivananda which have brought consolation, peace and hope to thousands and offer in a scientific combination the theory and practice of various Yogas to help to obtain the vision of God.

3. *The Membership* of the Divine Life Society is open to all who pledge themselves to practise Ahimsa, Satyam and Brahmacharya to the best of their ability and pay an initial admission fee of Rs. 5/- and an annual membership fee Rs. 2/- The members are entitled to the monthly 'Wisdom Light' and a Sadhana Set.

4. *Correspondence Section* clears doubts and helps the aspirants in their Spiritual Sadhana. Individual replies from Sri Swami Sivanandaji provide guidance, hope, illumination and courage to the faltering and the ePspondent. A unique method of maintaining

spiritual diary is one of the most effective teachniques of Sri Swamiji to induce constant introspection and bring about a quick progress in Sadhana.

5. *The Sivananda Primary School* imparts the knowledge of 3 Rs to the children of the locality besides religious education, training in Kirtan, Gita recitation, lectures and selfless service. It is a model institution of ideal work. The Ashram also maintains resident students.

6. *Students are trained*, under the direct supervision of Sri Swamiji, in the path of Yoga, so as to make them fit to serve as fresh nuclei for the spiritual awakening all over the world.

7. *Daily Classes* on Yoga, Bhakti, Vedanta, Asans, Pranayama, common Prayer, Satsangh, Japa, Kirtan and meditation are held.

8. *The Charitable Dispensary* at the Ashram attends to the needs of the locality, distributes medicines free, and provides special diet to the patients, when necessary.

9. Some of the doctor-sadhaks, who come to the Ashram, visit the neighbouring Ashrams and villages on *medical mission* and cure the sufferers and the needy.

10. *Magic Lantern Lectures* ate arranged during important functions, and propaganda tours are conducted by the Sadhaks.

11. *Cine-films* are produced for the benefit of posterity and for persons who are unable to come in direct contact with Sri Swamiji. They deal with the

life and teachings of the Swamiji, the Ashram activities and Yogic exercises.

12. Similary, *23 Gramophone Records* ring with the soul-stirring songs, Kirtans, messages and lectures in Swamiji's own voice. They have proved to be of immense value as a means for Satsangh.

13. The reference and research *Library* contains a large number of valuable books in different languages written by famous writers of the East and West It has proved to be a great boon to the resident-Sadhaks and visitors.

14. In the *Viswanath Mandir* at the Sivanand-ashram; regular daily Pooja with all the Vedic rites, is conducted for the weal of humanity. Special Poojas, prayers, Anushtana, and Kirtans are also conducted at the request of devotees for individual and general wealfare. A number of Sadhus and poor are fed on such occasions

15. *Sadhana Weeks* are conducted twice every year at regular intervals with a well arranged programme of practical Sadhana. Valuable instructions are given by the revered Swamiji and by learned and experienced Sadhus and Sadhaks. This is an effective, educative and elevating training in Sadhana and promotes sound spiritual energy, courage and mental strength in the aspirants.

16. To the Yatris of *Kedar-Badri*, Ananda Kutir has become an abode of rest and recoupment. Here, they are sure to get necessary facilities for their onward journey and the no-go-but-must-get rest and resf[illegible]hment on return journey.

17. The Society's *Monthly Magazine*, "Divine Life" is the messenger of Divine knowledge. Inspiring and illuminating articles by Sri Swami Sivanandaji as well as by other eminent writers on the practical aspect of religion, Sadhana and realisation provide a spiritual pabulum to millions of aspirants. The Journal has several serials and special interesting features. Notes and reports of the Society's activities both at the Centre and in the branches are published in it.

18. *An Ayurvedic Pharmacy* is maintained at Ananda Kutir, where selected specifics for vitality, vigour and general health such as Chyavanaprash, Brahmi Medicated Oil, Shilajit, Danta-Rakshak Tooth Powder, Brahmacharya Sudha, etc., are prepared under expert guidance and with fresh Himalayan herbs and other ingredients. The sacred Ganga Jal is used in all preparations

19. All the *Branches* of the Society in different parts of the country and abroad are kept in close touch with the Centre and guided in their general management and activities.

20. *The Sivananda Art Studio* at Ananda Kutir supplies to aspirants photos of Sri Swami Maharaj in various poses which are necessary for their meditation. It supplies also photos of Yoga Asans, Sri Viswanath Mandir, Lord Krishna, the Sivananda Ashram etc., at moderate price.

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# LIST OF BOOKS

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The patient should observe strict celibacy during the treatment. Take only rice, bread (of wheat).

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## HIMALAYAN DIVYAMRIT

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